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NOVEMBER 2006

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THE HANDS OF A MASTER

ANGELS & AIRWAVES' ATOM WILLARD

9 WICKED BEATS FROM **STRAPPING YOUNG LAD's** GENE HOGLAN

TONY WILLIAMS THE GENIUS REVEALED

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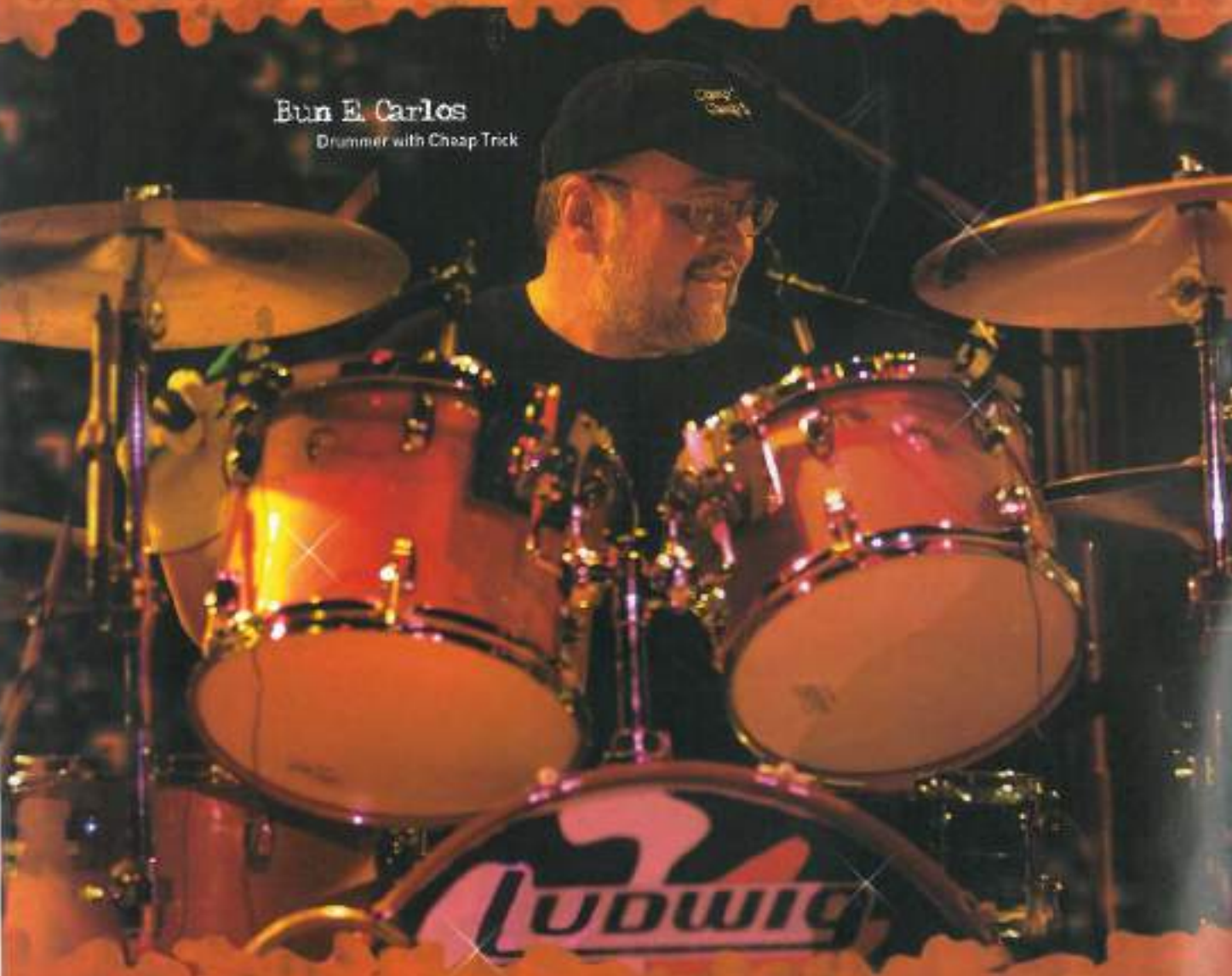

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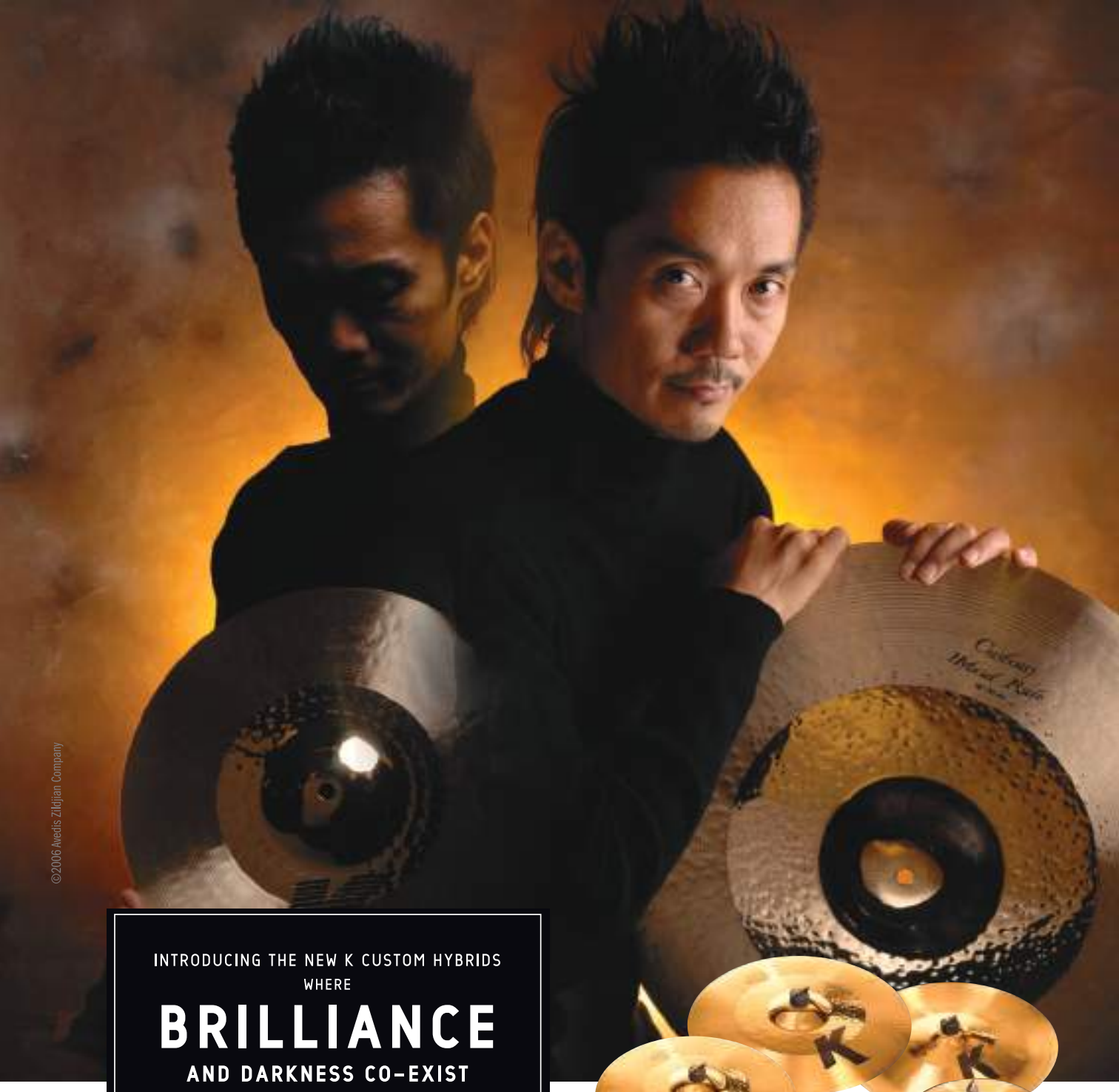

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Steve Di Stanislao-*"David Gilmour"*

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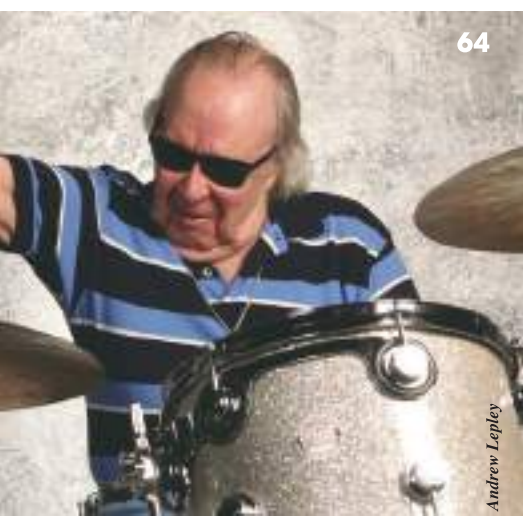

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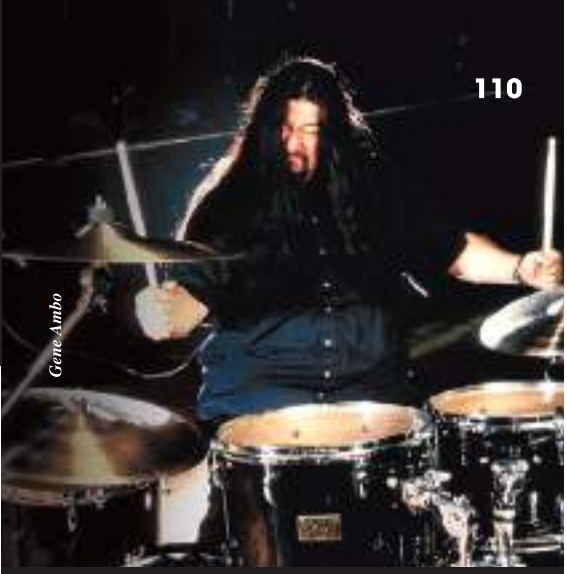

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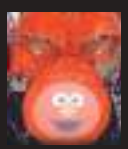

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Dignified & Dangerous

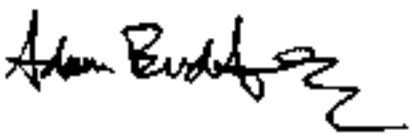
One of my all-time music heroes, Pink Floyd founder Syd Barrett, died recently. Rock histories like to focus on the erratic drug- and schizophrenia-fueled behavior Syd exhibited during his waning days in Floyd. Far too infrequently do writers examine his very real contributions to modern music's evolution—or his pre-fame warmth, intelligence, and humor. Syd eventually found the glare of the camera too painful, and spent the second half of his life in the comfort of his mother's home, quietly gardening and painting.

Another of my heroes, Keith Moon, was certainly no saint. A practical joker since childhood, Keith found in rock stardom the perfect stage for his comic tendencies—and his self-destructive ones as well. Many people are unaware that Keith died while trying to control the chemical addictions that so often put him and his friends in compromising and sometimes downright dangerous situations. Before his death, Keith had apparently arrived at a place where he knew it was time to grow up. Sadly, we'll never know what a wizened old Keith Moon would have been like; his notorious luck eventually just ran out.

Now, I believe that real rock 'n' roll is supposed to be confrontational, subversive, *dangerous* even. But I also worry that many young musicians continue to miss the lessons of Syd Barrett...or Keith Moon...or Jim Morrison...or Jimi Hendrix: It wasn't their excesses that made them dangerous, but their abilities to blast a hole through the status quo with their art, their insight, and their wit.

It's easy to strike an outlaw pose. MTV, Fuse, and BET are practically sagging under the weight of young bucks with hard looks, macho stances, and anti-authority sloganeering. But where will all the poseurs be ten, twenty years from now? Grooving thunderously like this month's cover star, Brad Wilk? Worshipped for their widespread influence, like Joe Morello? Obsessively analyzed for their otherworldly technique, like Frank Katz? Effortlessly embodying the pure joy of a perfect 2 and 4, like Bun E. Carlos? Or continuously re-evaluating and improving their already monstrous sonic *shazam*, like Atom Willard?

So go ahead, name your band something that'll piss off your dad...become your local tattoo artist's favorite customer...act too cool for the room. Then, *really* be dangerous. Work hard, develop some original ideas, and scare the heck out of the musical establishment with your chops, your honesty, and your imagination. That's the stuff that's truly revolutionary.



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BRANN DAILOR -"MASTODON"

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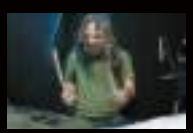
DANIEL SVENSSON -"IN FLAMES"

PAUL KOEHLER -"SILVERSTEIN"


JUSTIN GRAVES -"A LIFE ONCE LOST"

CHRIS ADLER-"LAMB OF GOD"

CHAD DAVIS -"HIMSA"

JASON BITTNER -"SHADOWS FALL"

AARON GILLESPIE -"UNDEROATH"

MIKE JUSTIAN -"UNEARTH"

JASKA RAATIKAINEN -"CHILDREN OF BODOM"

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Stewart Copeland

Stewart Copeland's playing with The Police firmly established him as one of the few unique and original drum stylists of the twentieth century. It's *great* to learn that he is back on the drums with new dedication and energy. I can't wait to hear him with Oysterhead, Gizmo, or any other project he's doing today. Thanks for bringing us his story. **Armando Escobar**

There's definitely something to Stewart's theory of Middle Eastern echoes in his drumming style. I attended elementary school near Tel Aviv, and my sister went to Stewart's high school in Beirut. Years later, when I saw The Police in concert, I felt an immediate affinity with Stewart's accents and phrasing, and his use of open spaces and exotic colors. His playing contains the beautiful dissonance of the street market. **Hal Howland**

Zach Hill And Damon Che

It's refreshing to see groundbreaking players like Zach Hill and Damon Che get their styles and personalities exposed, even though they're not tied to big-name drum and cymbal endorsements. Let's hear it for those who kick ass on entry-level equipment, mis-matched drums, and trashy cymbals!

If the major labels had a similar ear and not just an "eye" for talent, the music industry wouldn't be going the way of the dodo. Thanks for hipping us to the good stuff that no one else will. **Stephen O'Sullivan**

In Defense Of Online Drum Tabs

Mxtabs.net, which I consider the best site on the Internet for drum tabs, was recently shut down by the record industry. Not only are the record companies hurting music fans by suing them, but they are now hurting musicians as well by making it harder to learn songs for which there may not be published sheet music.

I don't understand how the playing of cover songs in any way hurts the record companies. If anything, it helps them. When I need to learn a song, I get the chart, and I buy the recording. When somebody hears a cover band play a song they like, they might go buy the original album, and be turned on to a whole new world of music.

Even Metallica—the poster child for condemning music piracy—defended the band Beatallica from Sony Music for playing covers of Metallica and Beatles songs, saying that cover songs are an essential part of the spirit of rock music. Imagine if Jimi Hendrix had not been allowed to play "All Along The Watchtower," or Santana had not been allowed to play "Oye Como Va." Imagine how many jazz greats have made their name playing Monk covers and other jazz standards.

I would not be the drummer I am today if not for the help of the drum charts I've found online. Who knows, maybe I'd have quit long ago after being frustrated and unable to figure out how to play the songs I love. **Chris Egner**

Duduka Da Fonseca

To see an article on a unique stylist like Duduka Da Fonseca in the same issue as a rock legend like Stewart Copeland and hot new up-and-comers like Zach Hill underscores the diversity of today's drum scene. (It says a lot about *MD*'s coverage of that scene, too.)

Duduka is traditional and original at the same time. He represents the real deal when it comes to Brazilian rhythmic culture, but he knows when to apply it and when not to, in order to take his music beyond ethnic boundaries. That's a rare gift. **Frank Alemento**

Dropped Beat

The August *Backbeats* report on the Cape Breton International Drum Festival accidentally omitted Zildjian Cymbals as a sponsor of the event.

Also in *Backbeats*, George Kollias' name was misspelled in the "Who's Playing What" segment.

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A Strupe Snare Drum?

I bought an old theater drumset at a garage sale a few years ago, planning to use it mainly for wall decoration in my studio. The kit includes coconuts, a woodblock, low-boy pedal cymbals, and a bass drum pedal. The bass drum is a big old Leedy & Ludwig, and the snare drum is a Strupe.

I know that Cecil Strupe was affiliated with Leedy. But I've done a bit of research on the Web, and no one seems to have any record of a Strupe brand drum. Can you give me any information?

Peggy Scalzo

MD drum historian Harry Cangany replies, "What you have is a Strupe Dictator model snare drum, made between 1932 and 1935. Cecil Strupe was the design engineer for Leedy, which was based in Indianapolis, Indiana. When Conn bought the Leedy company in 1930 and moved it to Elkhart, Indiana, Strupe didn't want to make the move. So he went into the drum business for himself.

"U.G. Leedy financed Strupe and brought in other employees. U.G. also installed his son, Edwin Hollis Leedy, as second in command. When that happened, the 'Strupe' badge was changed to 'L&S,' which informally stood for Leedy and Strupe. The name 'Leedy' couldn't officially be used, since U.G. sold his name when he sold the company.

"U.G. Leedy died before Strupe/L&S production really got going. Your drum was one of the first. I have seen one other drum with the Strupe name: the highest-priced model, called the Master Tension. There are other Dictators out there with the L&S badge, which is similar."

Zildjian Flanged Hi-Hats

Did Zildjian ever make something called Flanged hi-hats? If so, what was their purpose, and what did they sound like? Are they offered today?

Kevin Franciosi

Zildjian product communications and training manager John King replies, "Flanged hi-hats were introduced in the early 1960s and first mentioned in our literature in 1963. The design utilized a bottom cymbal that had a flattened outer edge approximately 1" wide. This provided more surface area for a conventional top cymbal to land on in order to create a subtle but broad-sounding 'chick' (or 'chup' as it was sometimes termed back then). The 'wash' of the pairing was also enhanced by this design. As with most hi-hats of that era, there was no particular weight category given to either the top or the bottom cymbal.

"Flanged hi-hats were available in sizes ranging from 12" to 16". They remained in our catalog until 1969, when our New Beat hi-hats gained significantly more attention."

Hi-Hat Positioning Problem

My legs are so long that when my hi-hat pedal is a comfortable distance away, my hi-hat cymbals are too far away for either hand. So I'm seriously considering getting a remote hi-hat system. I'm even thinking of experimenting with different places around the kit (like between my rack toms, á la Danny Carey). However, though many companies offer remote hi-hats, none offer explanations on how to hook one to your kit. Can you help me with this?

Jack Wright

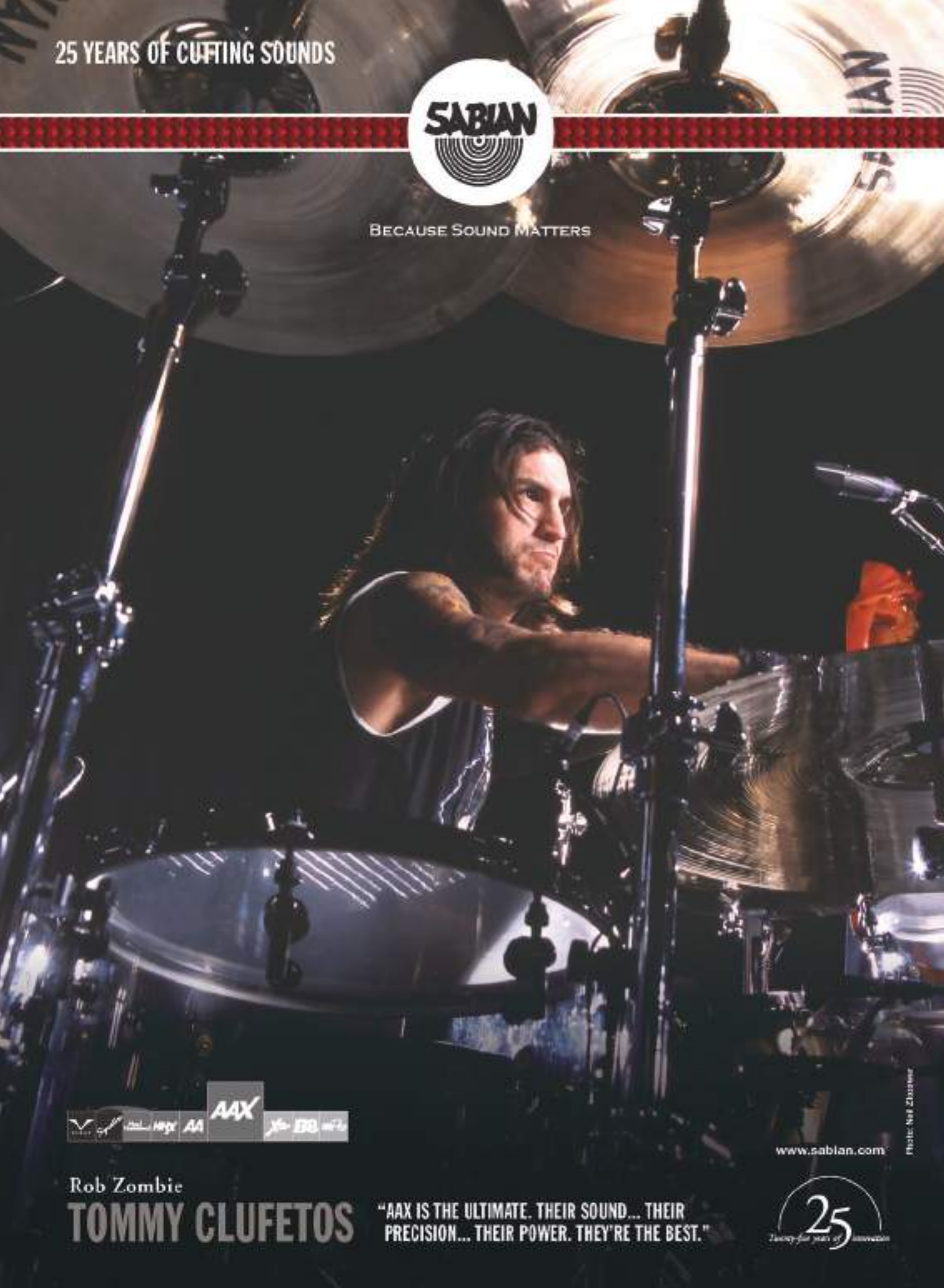
A cable remote hi-hat does sound like the solution to your positioning problem. Most drummers attach their remote hi-hats to other drum or cymbal stands. Some companies do, in fact, include mounting hardware with their remote hi-hat units. But even if they don't, dozens of multi-clamps and stand-extension devices are offered by DW, Cannon, Gibraltar, Mapex, Pearl, Tama, Yamaha, and other drum and hardware manufacturers. Check out their Web sites or visit a drumshop and see what's available.

Visualize where you want to put the hi-hat. Then determine which of your existing stands is the best one to attach the hi-hat to in order to put it there. Once you've done that, it's a matter of figuring out what accessory hardware you'll need to make the connection happen.

Cable hi-hats are generally attached to cymbal stands, as shown in these photos of a DW9502LB cable hi-hat from Drum Workshop.

Questions For MD's Drum Experts?

Send them to It's Questionable, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, or rvh@moderndrummer.com. Please include your full name with your question.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Danny Carey's
Lateralus Drum Sounds

Q You've influenced me very much through your drumming. I have two questions about songs on Tool's *Lateralus* album. First, on "The Grudge," what drums are you playing at the 1:30 marker, where the drums sound like they're playing the same notes as the main guitar riff? Second, what drums are you using on "Reflection"? **Danny Milgram**

A In both instances, the drums you've inquired about were Simmons SDX electronic drums. The SDX was an amazing system that was way ahead of its time in terms of sonic quality and sampling capability when it was released in 1988. The main samples in "The Grudge" were talking drums and Octobans. The samples on "Reflection" were a RotoTom (being tuned while struck) and an udu clay drum.

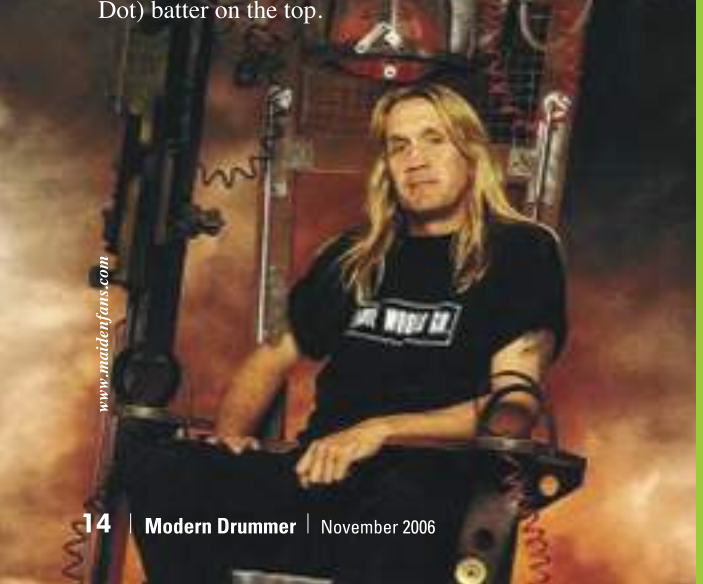
The Simmons SDX has been replaced in my setup by a prototype of the Mandala drum I developed with Vince DiFranco, and which will hopefully be released on the market soon. Thanks for your interest.

Alex Solca

Iron Maiden's
Nicko McBrain
The Rock In Rio Snare

Q I'd like to know the dimensions of the snare drum that you used on Iron Maiden's *Rock In Rio* double CD/DVD, as well as the drumhead that was on it. By the way, you are an awsome drummer. **Charles Petitclerc**

A Thanks very much for the kind words, Charles. The drum I used for that performance was a $5^1/_2$x14 Premier Signia snare, with a Remo coated CS (Black Dot) batter on the top.



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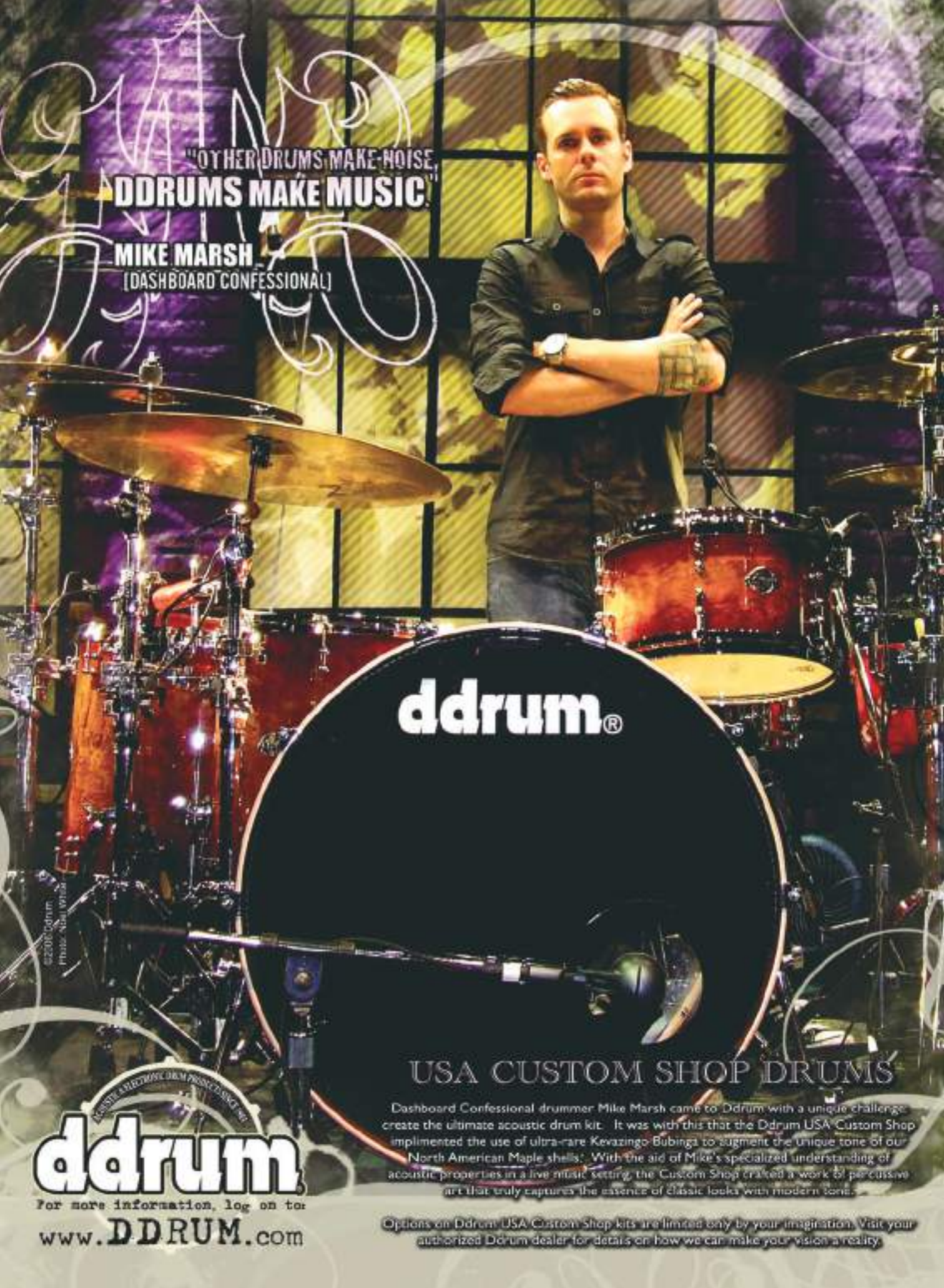
Yes's
Alan White
On Learning New Material

Robin Kaufman

Q Alan, you said in an interview that you had only three days to learn all the songs before going on a Yes concert tour in 1972-73 [immortalized on the *Yessongs* album]. How on earth did you remember all the parts? Did you use charts or have *anything* written down, or was it all just repeated listening? How did you compress all that material into three days of study, and then remember it on stage under the pressure of performance? **Peter Keown**

A Yes is known for their complex music and odd time signatures. So when I was approached to join the band, I was excited by the challenge it presented. We had only one band rehearsal in the three-day period building up to the first show. So I made some abbreviated charts of the music, and I also did listen repeatedly to all of the tracks in order to prepare for the tour.

With the repetitive listening—and by relying heavily on memory, sweat, and nerves of steel—I was able to achieve the level of skill required for the band's performance. I guess it was adequate, because they kept me around—and I'm still here thirty-five years later.



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PETER ERSKINE

(Lounge Art Ensemble, Diana Krall)

Text and photo by Joe Perry

Favorite TV shows: *The Sopranos, 24, The Shield*
Favorite food: Pasta
Favorite fast food: In'N'Out Burger (California hamburger chain)
Favorite drinks: Red wine, water
Favorite movies: *The Godfather, The Adventures Of Robin Hood* (1938 Errol Flynn version)
Favorite recording: Glen Gould's second recording of Bach's "Goldberg Variations"
Favorite up & coming drummers: Keith Carlock, my students at USC
Other instruments I play: Mallet keyboards, piano
If I wasn't a drummer, I'd be: A composer or a teacher
Vehicle I drive: Lexus 330
Most prized possession: My father's desk
Pets I have: A shiba inu (Japanese breed of dog) named Taro
Hobbies/interests: Computers, reading, spending time with my family
How I relax: Sitting in the backyard
Person I admire: My wife, Mutsy
Most unusual venue played: On a boat in Budapest
Biggest venue played: Montreal Jazz Festival with Diana Krall, July 2004, for 50,000 people
Most embarassing moment on stage: When I dropped *both* sticks during a solo
Songs I wish I'd played on: The Beatles' "Penny Lane" and "Magical Mystery Tour," and Bonnie Raitt's "Valley Of Pain"
Person I'd like to have a conversation with: Buddha

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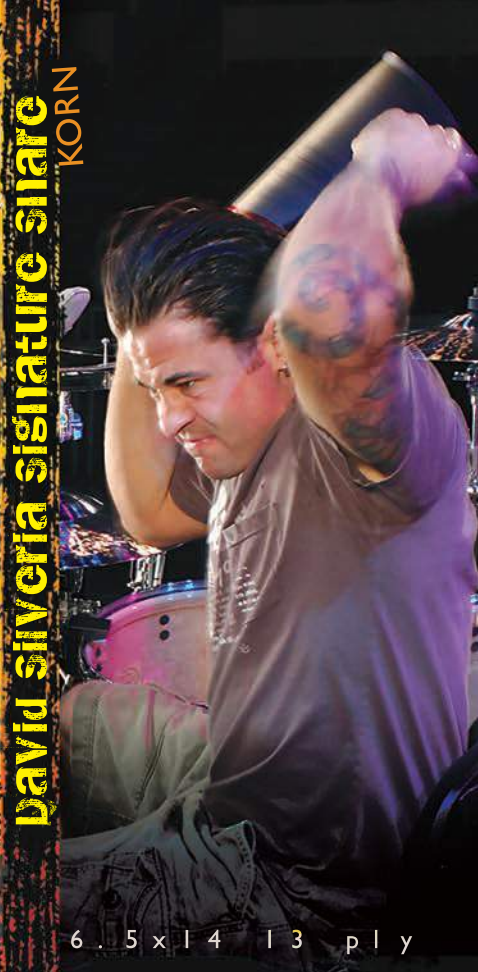
ASK A PRO

David Silveria signature snare
KORN



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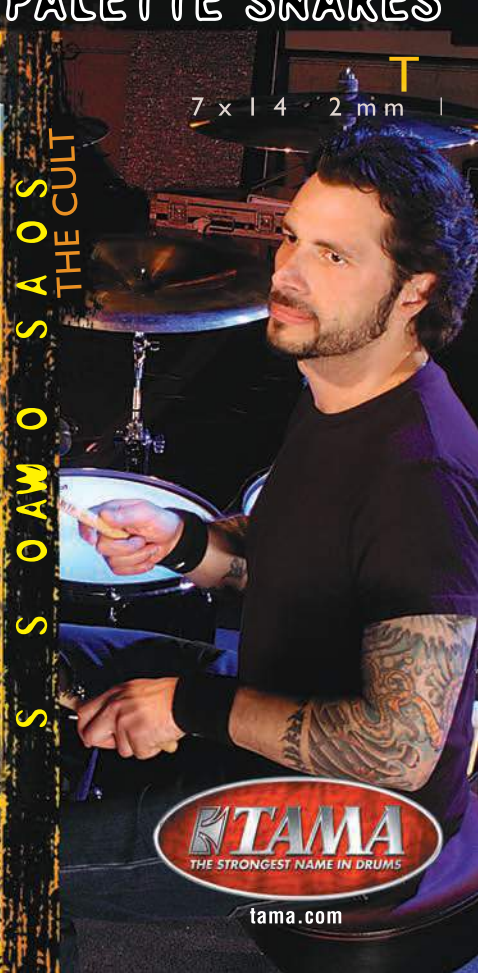

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Michael Bland

Former Prince Sideman Joins Soul Asylum

Most *MD* readers know Michael Bland as that funky R&B drummer who played with Prince for seven years during the '90s. And in fact, you can hear him on the title track of Prince's latest recording, *3121.* But even though the Minneapolis-born drummer is known for his solid R&B grooves, Bland actually grew up playing rock music. So it really shouldn't come as a surprise that in the fall of '04 he joined the Grammy-winning alternative band Soul Asylum, who recently released their first studio record in eight years, *The Silver Lining*. "I spent most of my formative years learning how to play drums while listening to FM album rock," Michael explains. "That's really where I come from."

Not only is Michael on the new recording, he will be touring with the band as a full-time member. "When I joined Soul Asylum they were without a drummer, and they had hired me to play on this new record," Bland says. "And somewhere during the second week of rehearsal, between songs, [singer] Dave Pirner just stopped and said, 'Hey, why don't you join the band.' I went, 'Okay,' and that was sort of the informal way it happened. It didn't really get inked or serious until recently."

Always comfortable being a sideman, Bland had to think about his choices of committing to the band as a full-time member. "The gig was consuming quite a bit of my time, and I had a lot of other offers," the drummer explains. "Soul Asylum didn't want to worry about the possibility of me leaving or having to go out to make money, so they cut me in as a full partner."

It sounds like Michael made the right choice. "No one has given me this type of consideration in my entire career," he enthuses. "I'm very happy with the way it's worked out."

For more on Michael Bland, please visit www.moderndrummer.com.

Billy Amendola

Robert Knight

Keith Carlock

Locking The Groove

Andrew Lepley

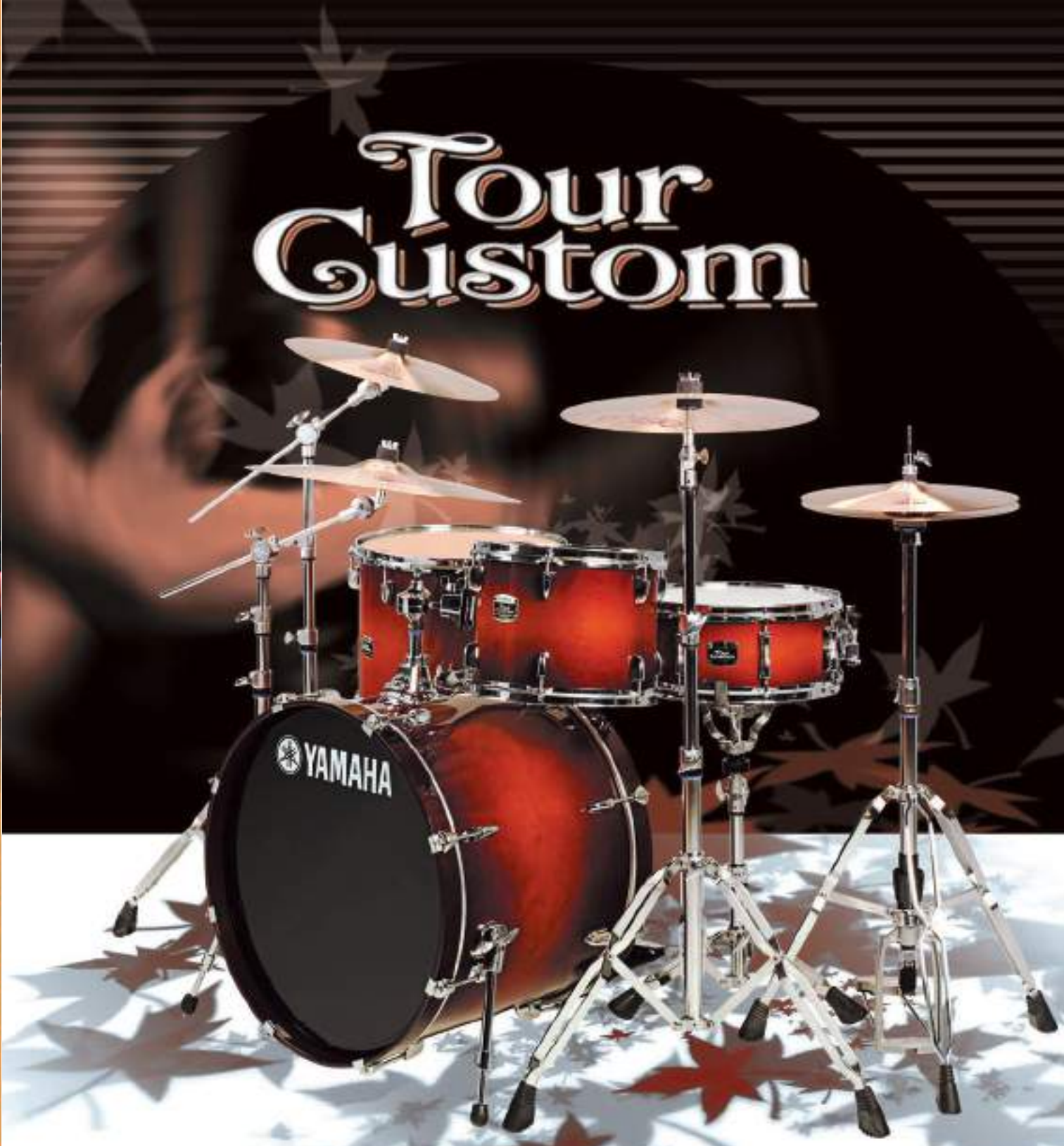
After touring with Sting and Steely Dan, and recording Donald Fagen's *Morph The Cat*, Keith Carlock faces the musician's cruelest fate: a night off in Cleveland. "Where is the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame?" Carlock wonders while on tour with Fagen.

Carlock's latest credits include tracks for new albums by Walter Becker, Diana Ross, Leni Stern, and Faith Hill, as well as a soundtrack for composer Carter Burwell. As if that's not enough (along with just finishing up a summer tour with Steely Dan), you can also catch one of Carlock's incredible riffs-and-ruffs solos at KeithCarlock.com. He pulls out all the stops, navigating Civil War funk, full-set flurries, New Orleans second-line, and staggered snare ruffs in the high-handed style that has become his trademark.

"I'm focusing on playing groove," Carlock says, "meaning it doesn't have to be 2 and 4; groove can be broken up in an atypical way that still has a flow. I'm improvising different street-beat patterns and breaking them up like a jazz drummer would, playing the swing ride cymbal pattern and comping with the rest of the kit. I'm using that approach with an 8th- or 16th-note framework, thinking in eight-bar phrases all the time. I might play over the barline, but the phrases are always there. I'm not playing free. When I've said all I can say in a section, I might completely change tempos or textures or sounds, and then let that develop. I want the listener to hear a musical solo."

A highlight of Donald Fagan's New York performance came in "Third World Man," where Carlock turned Steve Gadd's economic fills into pile-driver waves that stunned the sold-out audience. "I just took liberties to do my thing in the holes," Carlock explains. "That was the one place in the show where I could open up. I think of it like the end of 'Aja,' where Gadd played over that rhythmic vamp. I'm playing around the rhythms, doing whatever comes in the moment." **Ken Micallef**

Tour Custom



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Derrick Santini

Taking Back Sunday's
Mark O'Connell
Louder And Better

"That guy is seriously a genius," says Taking Back Sunday drummer Mark O'Connell. The "genius" O'Connell speaks of happens to be Eric Valentine—the producer of Taking Back Sunday's third album (and Warner Bros. debut), *Louder Now*—whom O'Connell notes as the source for the disc's stunning drum sounds.

Spending three days in Los Angeles tracking the drums with Valentine was a memorable experience for the New York–based drummer. According to O'Connell, Valentine placed four different microphones around and in the bass drum and utilized other seemingly unorthodox engineering techniques. "He put me in this place that he calls the torture chamber," says O'Connell. "It's this really echo-y room, and I recorded the last song of the album in there. The effect that the room gave the drums is insane."

O'Connell is also quick to credit Valentine for his recent improvement. "He definitely pushed me to push myself," the drummer says. "He made me a much better player than I was."

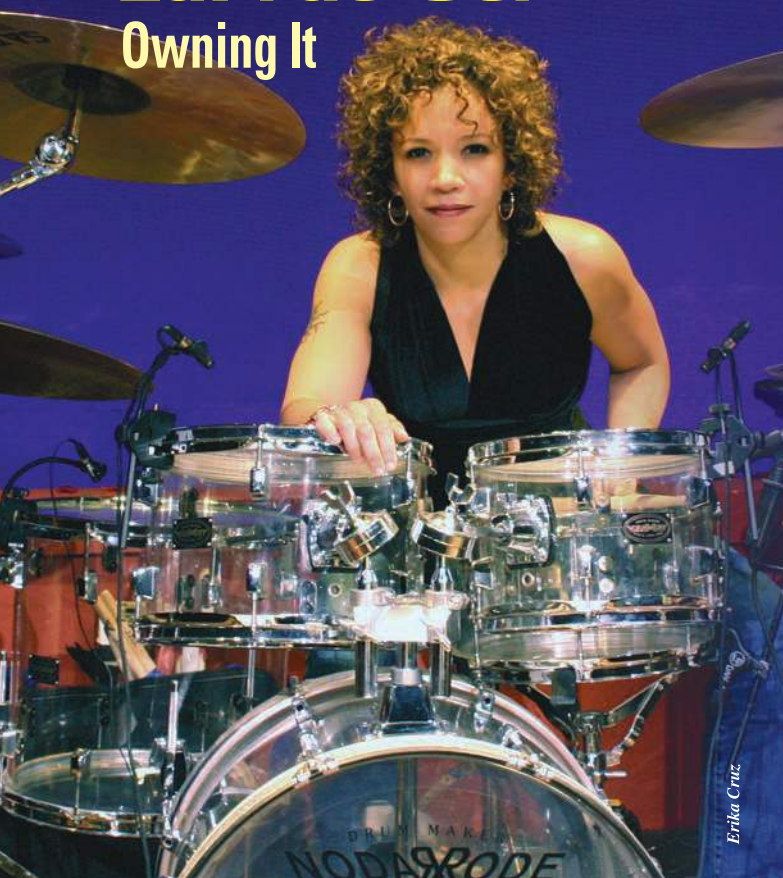
O'Connell got his first snare at nine years old and his first kit at twelve, and started his drumming career with the post-hardcore quintet Taking Back Sunday at the age of eighteen. "I graduated high school and a week later I was in the band," he recalls.

O'Connell says he learned by listening to drummers he idolized—Led Zeppelin's John Bonham, The Descendents' Bill Stevenson, and Green Day's Tré Cool. Years of steady touring taught O'Connell a few more lessons, like using a metronome to keep him in check on stage. "Before I started using a metronome live, I would get so excited while we were playing that I'd gradually speed up," he admits. "Two and a half minutes into a song, it would be going a million miles a minute. Using a metronome made me better. I have trouble playing without it now."

With *Louder Now*, O'Connell has proven himself a forerunner in the genre, and he intends to keep his momentum. "This is something I've always wanted," he says sincerely. "I really don't know what I'd be doing with my life if I didn't have this."

Waleed Rashidi

Sandra Bernhard's
LaFrae Sci
Owning It



Erika Cruz

As a college graduate with a degree in political theory and economics, drummer LaFrae Sci decided that law school probably wasn't in her future—once she'd been paying her rent for a year by playing drums. "I'd played drums and other instruments since I was a kid," says LaFrae, "but I really started to focus on the kit while in college. I'd go to sessions, and I started getting gigs. Six or seven years into it I realized, 'I think I'm a professional drummer!'"

LaFrae's current gig with Sandra Bernhard's musical comedy show, *The Bad And The Beautiful*, gives her the distinction of being the first female drummer *and* musical director in Broadway or off-Broadway history. "There are so many different directions that drummers can go in, especially today," she observes. "As I'm growing and learning, I don't think it's fated for me to record and tour with just one artist for ten years. I see myself being a drummer *with* a band and being a drummer apart from a band situation. Playing with Sandra is absolutely fantastic in terms of bolstering me in a secure gig while affording me the ability to do my own thing.

"As a player," LaFrae continues, "I always ask myself, Who am I and how am I going to express what I feel? I'm also aware that I need to have the courage to look in directions in which I don't already see people moving."

With a résumé that includes such diverse gigs as hip-hop artist Kelis, hardcore thrasher Bumblefoot, and the backing orchestra for the daytime Emmy Awards, LaFrae's versatility stems from simple necessity. "I came up sitting in nightly at jazz clubs," the drummer explains. "Since there are so many different types of jazz, I had to learn other styles to be able to approach all of the jazz I was playing. Some people were writing in a fusion vein, drawing from a rock base with improvisation. Other times I was playing music based on Brazilian roots, so I had to jump into the Brazilian thing.

"I love the freedom and improvisation of jazz," LaFrae insists, "but whatever style I'm playing, I try to really own it so that whoever hears me will think that's the *only* style I play. That's been one of my goals since I was a young drummer. I feel like I'm getting there."

Gail Worley

Flo Mounier

Drum Lessons From The Crypt

Death metal. Black metal. Grind-core. Metal-core. Prog metal. The list of heavy subgenres is long and winding, and Canada's Cryptopsy have explored nearly all of them. "We have fans from many of the metal scenes, and other scenes as well," says Cryptopsy drummer-extraordinaire Flo Mounier. "We've had people with jazz backgrounds come to our shows because they think we play a more progressive style of metal." If anything, Cryptopsy specialize in "extreme metal," a tag the drummer suggests incorporates many subgenres of heavy music. And his technically impressive approach is often at the forefront of his band's extreme amalgamations.

On his recent instructional DVD release, *Extreme Metal Drumming 101*, Mounier reveals how he balances so many signatures and patterns with such power, dexterity, groove, and originality. And the material presented on this two-disc crash course—featuring clips of lessons, tablature, studio sessions, gigs, clinics, and drum festivals—are specifically designed to help drummers play more "extreme" than ever. In fact, Mounier did a market study to find out what fans wanted to learn and watch, which included the topic of stretching. "Drummers know how to get the left foot going faster," Flo explains, "and to power with the right foot."

Spanning over four hours, *101* also covers the more advanced aspects of Mounier's repertoire, as well as his less obvious tom-tom, bongo, and sampling work. "It offers little tricks and tips," the drummer suggests. "There's nothing really secretive about any of it, though. It's all about hard work and practice." And heavy-hitters will surely dig *101*'s library of grind and blast beats.

Speaking of sick beats, plenty of them appear on Cryptopsy's newest album, *Once Was Not*. "I tried to hit harder on it," says Mounier, who relies on a Pearl Masterworks kit with an Icon rack and nineteen Sabian cymbals. "I developed techniques that make it easier to go fast, so my energy is more spent on the groove aspect." The record also reveals how Mounier's warp-speed chops complement his slower meanderings. "Doing the slow stuff allows the speed to come out more. It's a dynamic that creates feeling. If there's no feeling in a song, it's not a song." **Jeff Perlah**

NEWS

Brian Tichy has been touring Europe with Billy Idol, as well as doing several US dates. The two have been writing for Billy's next CD, along with recording a Christmas disc. You can also catch Brian on Derek Sherinian's latest, as well as in the video for "In The Summertime," featuring Billy Idol, Slash, and Tony Franklin.

Jim Paluzzi and **Vinnie Dombrowski** handled the drum tracks on Mexico 70's *35 Whirlpools Below Sound*.

Kevin Jarvis is on the road with Grant Lee Phillips.

Sean Paddock is on the new Kenny Chesney fourteen-song concert disc, *Live Those Songs Again*.

Omar Gongora is on the new record by Kinky, *Reina*.

Daniel Glass has been on the road with Royal Crown Revue, and he's recently released a DVD update of his instructional video, called *Principles Of Swingtime*.

Justin Graves is on the road with A Life Once Lost.

Jordan Mancino has been gigging with As I Lay Dying.

Shannon Lucas has been playing out with All That Remains.

Daniel Davison is on the new CD by Norma Jean.

Alicia Warrington is now an official member of Lillix. She's on the group's latest, *Inside The Hollow*.

Dave Ardolina is on Dirty Rig's debut, *Rock Did It*.

Scott Smith is playing dates with Cori Yarckin in support of her CD *Ringing In My Head*. **Jimmy Robertson** produced and played/programmed on the disc. For more info visit www.coriyarckin.com.

Death Cab's **Jason McGerr** produced a few tracks on the latest Smoosh CD, *Free To Stay*, featuring sisters Asya on keyboards and vocals and **Chloe** on drums.

Percussionist **Taku Hirano** is touring Japan with Japanese pop superstar Utada Hikaru.

Louis Santiago Jr. has launched a new Web site, www.lousantiagojr.com. He's also in the studio with Christian contemporary rock singer Jeff Deyo, and can be heard on Josh Young's *Closer*.

Chad Cromwell has been touring with Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. He's also on Mark Knopfler & Emmylou Harris's CD *All The Roadrunning*, Neil Young's *Living With War*, and a four-disc box set of new music by Vince Gill. Chad also appears on new releases by Raul Malo, Miranda Lamberts, Blake Shelton, Rick Trevino, and Carolina Rain.

DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

Booker T & The MG's' **Al Jackson Jr.** was born on 11/27/34, **Yogi Horton** on 11/25/59.

Eric Carr passed away on 11/24/91. **Tony Thompson** was born on 11/15/54 and passed away on 11/12/03. **R.J. Vealey**, who joined The Atlanta Rhythm Section in 1995, passed away on 11/13/99.

On 11/4/47, saxophonist Charlie Parker records *Klact-Oveedseds-Tene* with **Max Roach** on drums.

Beatles John, George, and Paul all make guest appearances on **Ringo Starr**'s third solo record, *Ringo*, released on 11/17/73.

On 11/16/91, Vater Percussion launches the **Vater** brand of drumsticks.

On 11/16/01, Regal Tip's **Joe Calato** is inducted into the PAS Hall Of Fame.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Roy Burns (Aquarian): 11/30/35	**Bev Bevan** (ELO): 11/25/46	**Charlie Benante** (Anthrax): 11/27/62
Idris Muhammad (jazz and R&B great): 11/13/39	**Alphonse Mouzon** (fusion great): 11/21/48	**Mike Bordin** (Ozzy Osbourne): 11/27/62
Billy Hart (jazz master): 11/29/40	**Wally Gator Watson** (Lionel Hampton): 11/9/51	**Matt Cameron** (Pearl Jam): 11/28/62
Pete Best (early Beatles): 11/21/41	**Clem Burke** (Blondie): 11/24/55	**Rick Allen** (Def Leppard): 11/1/63
Floyd Sneed (Three Dog Night): 11/22/43	**Adam Nussbaum** (jazz master): 11/29/55	**Russ Miller** (sessions): 11/16/69
Les DeMerle (Transfusion): 11/4/46	**Matt Sorum** (Velvet Revolver): 11/19/60	**Antonio Sanchez** (Pat Metheny): 11/1/71
David Garibaldi (Tower Of Power): 11/4/46	**Pat Petrillo** (Gloria Gaynor): 11/2/61	**Travis Barker** (Transplants): 11/14/75

MD RADIO

To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's *Update*, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.

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Darrell Robinson [Jill Scott, LL Cool J]

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Gretsch Catalina Club Mod Kit

Custom Style In Affordable Fashion

by Michael Dawson

KEY NOTES

- Custom looks
- Deep bass drum
- Evans G1 batter heads
- Snare tilter prone to slipping

True story: After I played the Gretsch Catalina Club Mod drumkit at a recent beach-front gig, the club's soundman was so impressed that he wanted to go out the next day and pick up a set for himself. Maybe he dug the drums' unique look, or the big sound of the toms, or the surprisingly low price tag. Chances are, it was a combination of all three.

In addition to the abovementioned gig, I also tested the kit at a rehearsal with a loud rock band, and at a recording session. Before we dig into how the drums performed in each of these scenarios, let's take a look at this kit from the ground up.

Out Of The Box

The Catalina Club Mod is a mid-level kit with unusual finishes, black hardware, offset lugs, suspension mounts, and an oversized bass drum—features not generally offered at such a low price. The kit is currently only available in a four-piece configuration and in two covered finishes. Our review set featured the quasi-marbled Blue Alien covering. The other option is a Black And Silver Sparkle Stripe finish.

Gretsch's Catalina Club Mod kit features a distinctive look, part of which is created by top and bottom lugs that are offset from each other.

Aside from the kit's interesting look, I noticed a few other cool features as I was taking the drums out of their boxes. First, the shells feature rounded bearing edges. That, plus the fact that they're made of mahogany, had me excited to hear the drums in action. (Mahogany + rounded bearing edges = warm "vintage" sound.) The toms and snare also came equipped with Evans coated G1 batter heads. That's a huge bonus, since many manufacturers ship lower-priced kits with second-rate heads that are frustrating to work with.

Perhaps my strongest first impression was of the kit's super-deep 20x22 bass drum. While 20"-deep kicks aren't uncommon these days, this was the first time that I'd checked one out. Frankly, it had me concerned. Would it fit in my car? Would it fit

through the doorway at my rehearsal space? And would I be able to control its power? You'll get the answers to those questions in a bit.

The kit performed well in the real world...in Ocean City, Maryland.

Set-Up And Tune-Up

Setting up the Club Mod kit was simple. The included Gibraltar 5600DBPK hardware package features two medium-duty double-braced cymbal stands that are very stable and easy to position. I was particularly impressed with the flexibility of the disappearing boom stand. The 5607 hi-hat features a rotating tripod, which makes placing it close to the 5611 chain-drive double pedal a breeze. And while I'm not usually a fan of flying rack toms from cymbal stands, I had no trouble finding a comfortable placement with the 12" tom attached to the 5610 straight cymbal stand. I also really liked the oversized snare basket adjustment knob on the snare stand.

A somewhat unusual item worth noting is that the legs on the 14x16 floor tom are not evenly spaced around the drum. Instead, they form a sort of elongated triangle. This uneven spacing caused some limitations with positioning other stand legs around the floor tom.

When it came to tuning, the drums favored a medium to high range. With both heads tuned loose, the toms tended to flap out. But I was able to find a nice low-end tone by tensioning the bottom heads a few turns tighter than the tops. The $6^{1}/_{2}$"-deep snare drum sat nicely at a medium-tight tuning, where it produced a solid crack with plenty of ring.

The drum I found most difficult to tune right out of the box was the bass drum. Considering its 20" depth, I expected it to produce a huge sub-woofer thump. But it didn't. No matter how I tuned the drum's pre-muffled batter and full resonant head (with no hole), I wasn't able to get as big and full a sound as I had expected from a drum this size.

At Rehearsal

My first "real world" test of the Club Mod kit was at a local rehearsal studio. (Incidentally, the drums fit easily into my small sedan, and I had no problem maneuvering the kick drum through the tight corridors of the studio.) At this rehearsal, I had to compete with two Marshall half-stacks, a large bass cabinet, and a mid-sized PA in order to be heard. No problems there. The toms sounded big and full even when surrounded by a wall of power chords and thumping bass, and the snare cut through with plenty of personality. I was also surprised at how well the bass drum performed. The underwhelming sound I got when I tried to tune the drum by itself was replaced by a strong and punchy presence with the band.

I also gave the Gibraltar 5611 double pedal that came with the kit a test run. For my taste, it was a little light. I felt like I had to work too hard to get the power that I wanted. And because the main pedal doesn't have a solid base, it had a tendency to bounce around during stronger strokes.

To The Gig

I decided to experiment with different batter heads on the toms and kick to see if I could get a bigger sound for my acoustic-rock beach gig. I replaced the coated G1s on the toms with Evans' EC2s, and the single-ply kick head with a clear Remo Emperor. The drums immediately sounded *much* deeper and had a more refined tone. I was also able to tune them lower.

On stage, the drums sounded big and warm. And several people commented on how cool they looked from the floor. The only problem that I encountered was with the snare stand. As the evening progressed, the stand's tilter started to slip. I had to really crank it down to keep it from shifting.

In The Studio

The next day, I took the kit to a recording session. The toms required minimal re-tuning, but the snare drum needed a couple of small pieces of Moon Gel to tame the overring. I also tossed a folded blanket into the kick to give it a little more punch.

After ten minutes of sound check, the snare and toms were good to go. However, the engineer struggled to find a balance of attack, punch, and low-end thump in the kick. I purposely kept the solid front head on the drum to capture the drum's true sound. But with a drum this deep, you'll probably want to cut a small hole in the front head and put the mic inside the drum to get a more controlled sound.

The Bottom Line

If you're in the market for an affordable kit that's a little more "customized" than other sets in its price range, the Catalina Club Mod is one to check out. Aside from a few minor quirks, this kit is definitely worth its moderate price tag. Just ask my soundman.

THE NUMBERS

Catalina Club Mod four-piece shell pack **$920**
Includes $6^{1}/_{2}$x14 snare, 8x12 rack tom, 14x16 floor tom, 20x22 bass drum, and a single tom clamp.

Gibraltar 5600DBPK hardware package **$415**
Includes a snare drum, hi-hat, straight cymbal, and boom stand, as well as a free chain-drive double pedal upgrade.

(860) 509-8888, www.gretschdrums.com

To hear this kit in action, download a sample mp3 at MODERNDRUMMER.com

Zildjian K Custom Hybrid Cymbals

Exotic Look, Workaday Cymbals

by T. Bruce Wittet

KEY NOTES

- Rides combine warmth of K models with penetration of K Customs
- Crashes are quick and rich, with optimum sustain
- Odd-sized hi-hats bridge the gap between 13" and 14" pairs

I first encountered the new Zildjian K Custom Hybrid cymbals at a rehearsal room at the 2005 Montreal Drum Fest. Akira Jimbo, who was performing at the show, proudly showed me prototypes of the cymbal line he'd been developing with Zildjian master designer Paul Francis. Akira played each of the new cymbals for me—obviously pleased with the prototypes.

A month or so after their debut at the 2006 winter NAMM show, a set of Hybrids arrived for testing. During my two-month run with the cymbals, I kept in touch with Akira and Paul by email and phone.

The Model Line

The Hybrid line combines a lathed area towards the edges of the cymbals with an unlathed area top and bottom, thus earning the "hybrid" designation. In fact, the cymbals combine traits of the K Custom ride, specifically the brilliant unlathed finish, with those of conventionally lathed and hammered standard K Zildjians.

Akira explained the design concept to me. "I like the brilliant, sharp sound of the K

Custom ride," he said. "But for acoustic music, it's too dry. I like K Zildjian rides for acoustic music, but they're too soft for contemporary music. So I thought, What if Zildjian could lathe the outer half of the K Custom ride, creating more wash and crash potential, but keep the penetrating quality? I took the idea to Paul Francis, and the results were amazing."

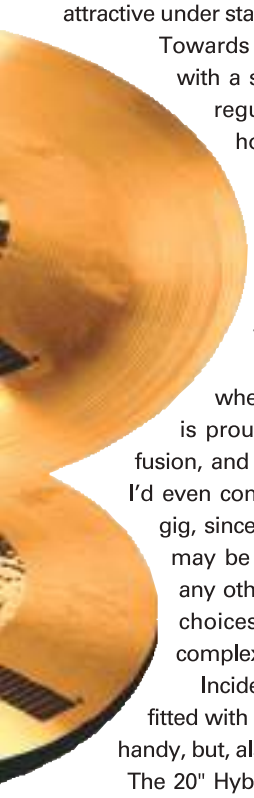
The thrust of the design exercise was initially to produce rides, crashes, and hi-hats to Akira's specs. Once he was satisfied, Paul Francis rounded out the line by creating Chinas and splashes to match. With the exception of the 20" ride, all Hybrid sizes are odd, as in 9", 17", 19", and so on.

In a later email, Akira added, "There are three important points to the Hybrid line. First, brilliance and darkness can coexist. Second, the cymbals have maximum versatility. Third, they could be a new standard for the 21st century."

We'll touch on points one and two. The third we'll leave to the historians.

Through The Looking Glass

I think most people would agree that the Hybrids are beautiful, with their shiny bands affording an exotic, Asian aesthetic. The middle portion of the 20" ride was polished to such an extent that I was able to use it as a mirror on a gig. As a line, the Hybrids are very attractive under stage lights.



Towards the edge, the medium-weight 20" ride played with a softer feel than a K Custom, reminding me of a regular K ride. When played towards the middle, however, the articulation increased—not greatly, but certainly noticeably—and the bell was a stunner. I expected that the lack of lathing would "isolate" the bell from the body and produce an obtrusive sound, but I was wrong. On gigs, I laid into the bell and excited the body as well—but the wash stayed in the background.

You know how sometimes everybody flinches when you lay into a rock bell? The Hybrid bell's tone is proud but not obnoxious, making it ideal for rock, fusion, and *especially* Latin music. Although I didn't do so, I'd even consider bringing the 20" ride on a traditional jazz gig, since it'll ride and also offer short crashes. The pitch may be a little high for contemporary trio jazz, but for any other style, the Hybrid would be high on my list of choices. It's a fabulous generic ride with more tonal complexity than the word "generic" usually connotes.

Incidentally, I have a feeling that this ride would *kill* if fitted with three brass split rivets. I had my titanium drill bit handy, but, alas, I chickened out.

The 20" Hybrid ride is not a heavy cymbal. If you're playing with light sticks, it can be a little hard to hear from the drum throne when you're competing with floor wedge monitors. The beauty is that you can switch from a 5A to a 5B or heavier stick to achieve enhanced articulation, and the cymbal won't explode or go into convulsions.

Controlled Crashes

The Hybrid 17" and 19" crashes feature substantial but not huge bells, thus fostering good crash qualities. The bells are left unlathed, which removes harmonics from the equation. But it's nothing you'd miss. After several gigs, I fell in love with the 19" crash. The response was quick, the tone was hearty, and the decay was almost clipped off. It worked for me equally well on rock and singer-songwriter gigs. Projection was excellent, enhanced by the unlathed bell, which was usable for riding.

Meanwhile the 17" Hybrid was as quick as any 16" crash but was broader in tone, making it ideal for cutting through keyboards and electronic samples. What I appreciated about the Hybrid crashes was that they didn't dissolve into an apologetic hiss when hit hard. Both cymbals aced it with sticks, and they also responded well with mallets and various rods.

Hats: Thirteen Inches—And Then Some

In accordance with the "odd-size ethic" prevailing in this line, Hybrid hats are $13\frac{1}{4}$" in diameter. (You read that correctly.) I asked Akira Jimbo to explain the quarter-inch augmentation. "I've been using 13" hats for a long time, because they're more controllable," he responded. "The Hybrid $13\frac{1}{4}$" hats have the control of 13" models, with the power of 14" hats."

While the cymbals appear to incorporate Zildjian's rippled Mastersound edge, in fact it is a *reverse* Mastersound edge, hammered so as to increase the surface contact between the top and bottom cymbals. In the rehearsal room and on a gig I noticed less of the sharp, sometimes brittle Mastersound "chick," but with the same hyper articulation. The additional quarter-inch of diameter meant that the closed sound was a little more low-pitched and the open tone was slightly broader than that of your basic 13" pair.

And Then There Are...

I didn't gig with the Hybrid splashes or Chinas, simply because no gigs came up that required them. But I did put them through their paces during rehearsals.

The 19" China cymbal possibly owed the least to the Hybrid treatment. It was a fat-sounding cymbal that could be ridden or crashed and didn't seem to "gate off" as much as the crashes did.

Similarly, the 9" and 11" splashes were not blatantly Hybrid in character—just good. They were thin enough to offer delicacy in the face of soft strokes, yet strong enough to weather blows from larger sticks without choking.

Hybrid Conclusions

As their name might imply, Zildjian Hybrids are a little of this and a little of that. Ordinarily that approach spells compromises. In this instance, it offers genuine alternative cymbal sounds. After spending considerable time with these cymbals, I'm thinking that they'll work for virtually any recording or live gig. In sum, they offer sounds that will please a wide range of drummers. I agree with Akira that dark and light sounds can coexist peacefully. And I concur with Paul Francis's assessment: "Everybody could use these cymbals."

THE NUMBERS

9" splash	$176
11" splash	$202
$13\frac{1}{4}$" hi-hats	$516
17" crash	$376
19" crash	$436
19" China	$446
20" ride	$462

(781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com

Meinl Samba Series Brazilian Percussion

Blame It On Rio

by Norman Arnold

KEY NOTES

- Authentic sounds
- Light weight
- Excellent construction quality

Meinl's Samba Series line of Brazilian percussion instruments is extensive, authentic, and appealing. The drums are also light, so they'll be easy to carry all day during that carnavale parade in your neighborhood. Let's check 'em out.

Stand Alone Surdos

There are two Stand Alone surdos: an 18x22 and a 20x24. Both have (thank the Lord) height-adjustable legs ready to deploy when your parade comes to a stop. The three legs fit into hard rubber mounts on the shell, which are fitted with quick-release lugs to secure the legs. The aluminum-shell drums are fitted with replaceable synthetic heads attached with chrome-plated hardware and countersunk bolt heads.

These drums are huge. They're also huge-sounding, with a lot of resonance and a particularly long decay. I recorded a basic batucada in my studio, using all the Meinl Samba drums, and these surdos sounded great. Even if you're not playing Brazilian music, if you work with producers or film composers looking for a new low drum sound, these drums are inspirational. I played them in many different ways, including with Vic Firth Rutes and with my bare hands. They produce a great low rumble, and they are *loud*. You'll have no problems holding down the low end of any samba school with these. (By the way, Meinl's traditional surdos without legs—in 18x22, 20x24, and 22x24 sizes—are just as impressive, with the 22x24 rumbling the roof.)

Carrying bags for Meinl Surdos are available separately. They're well made, with heavy-duty padded nylon and reinforced stitching. A good call if you'll be lugging these things around.

Stand Alone Surdo

Wood Repinique

Repiniques

A Repinique is a sort of medium-sized tom that's played with a stick (The other hand is used for open tones and slaps.) Meinl offers aluminum and wood repiniques. The aluminum models come in 10x10 and 12x12 sizes. I had the 10x10 to review, and it was a pleasure to play. It's made in the same style as the surdo, with countersunk bolts, synthetic heads, and a ridgeline on the shell body. In fact, the aluminum repinique is almost like a mini-surdo. It sounds great—very resonant and bright. It's also really light and would be easy to carry all day.

The wood repinique is made from rubberwood in an African brown color and a high-gloss finish. Its 12x10 wooden body produces a warmer sound than that of its aluminum counterpart, and it really blends nicely with the other instruments. It's a bit heavier than the aluminum model, but is still very manageable.

Meinl offers a professional repinique bag, as well as a samba belt (SB-R) that will come in handy with the surdos and the repiniques.

Caixas

Meinl's $4^1/_2$x12 and 4x14 aluminum caixas—the "snare drums" of the Brazilian ensemble—are bright and cutting. Rimshots from both of these drums are really pronounced. Their synthetic heads and steel wire snares combine to produce a great rattle that I really loved. The snares on the drums have a professional and sturdy throw-off mechanism.

I left the drums tuned rather low for a looser feel, and I thought they sounded very

authentic (that is, not too clean). They are also very light and easy to carry around.

Pandeiros

Okay...full disclosure. I suck at playing pandeiros. But I know enough to spot a good one when I see and hear it.

Pandeiros could loosely be described as Brazilian tambourines. Meinl's 10" and 12" wooden pandeiros come with replaceable goat heads that give the drums a very warm sound. Meanwhile, their jingles contribute a bright sound. The combination is fantastic.

Hardware elements on these drums are top notch. Bags are also available for them.

Tamborims

Although the name is similar, tamborims are *not* tambourines. They are very small, single-headed frame drums that serve as the sopranos in a Brazilian percussion ensemble. (Actually, "firecrackers" might be more appropriate than "sopranos.")

Meinl's Floatune tamborims are loud, piercing, and bright. When played with plastic tamborim sticks, these little drums really

jump out with an extremely sharp sound. I think Meinl is on to something with their patented Floatune system. It's a method of mounting the rims so that they're connected to each other while floating on the shell.

Floatune tamborims come with shells of ABS plastic, aluminum, brass- and chrome-plated steel, and rubberwood, in a bevy of color choices. They're all well made, with replaceable heads and countersunk bolts. Bags are an option.

Agogos, Cowbells, Shakers, And More

Rounding out our review selection is the bell portion of the Samba series. The agogos come in two styles: a highly polished chrome finish and a steel finish, with two sizes of each. They have a neat flex connection that allows the bells to clack together when you squeeze them, for a really cool 16th-note mute pattern.

Handheld cowbells come in steel and aluminum. There are two sizes in each metal. Both are particularly wide and very comfortable in the hand. All sound very authentic.

Meinl's shakers come in single, double, or triple versions, and in small, medium, and large sizes of each version. The thin aluminum-shell design is perfect for just the right shaker sound. All are musical and loud.

The right sticks are essential to getting an authentic sound from Brazilian percussion instruments. Meinl provides a great selection of sticks and beaters to achieve that goal.

Conclusion

Meinl's Samba series pretty much covers the spectrum of Brazilian percussion. The gear is solidly made and offers great sounds. Highly recommended.

THE NUMBERS

18x22 Stand Alone Surdo	$359
20x24 Stand Alone Surdo	$379
10x10 Aluminum Repinique	$145
12x12 Aluminum Repinique	$160
12x10 Wood Repinique	$170
4 1/2x12 Caixa	$109
4x14 Caixa	$119
10" Pandeiro	$129
12" Pandeiro	$149
6" ABS Plastic Tamborim	$43
6" Aluminum, Chromed Steel, Brass-Plated Steel, and Rubberwood Tamborim	$65
Small Agogo Bell, chrome or steel finish	$52
Large Agogo Bell, chrome or steel finish	$74
4 1/2" Steel Handheld Bell	$42
6 1/4" Steel Handheld Bell	$45
4 1/2" Aluminum Handheld Bell	$48
6 1/4" Aluminum Handheld Bell	$59
Shakers	$20–$75

(single, double, and triple models are available in three sizes each.)

(615) 227-5090, www.meinlpercussion.com

Tama Limited Edition Chrome Cobra Bass Drum Pedals And HS700WN Snare Stand

Elegance And Innovation

by Mike Haid

KEY NOTES

- Chrome Cobra pedals offer smooth, solid feel with classy, futuristic look
- Pedals include stylish, durable road case
- Versatile snare stand accommodates a wide range of drum depths

Tama seems to continually stay one step ahead of the game with creative, common-sense hardware inventions. The items up for scrutiny in this review include the limited-edition Chrome Cobra single and double pedals, and the innovative HS700WN snare stand. Slight changes in the construction of the Chrome Cobra (as compared to the original Iron Cobra) are designed to entice and indulge, while the innovations in the snare stand will facilitate current trends in drum sizes. Please follow me to the examining room.

Fancy Facelift

Tama's "standard" Iron Cobra Power Glide single and double bass drum pedals are among the smoothest, quietest, easiest-to-adjust pedals on the market. The Chrome Cobras are the Rolls Royce versions. They feature a futuristic cosmetic design, with eye-catching, mirrored-chrome parts. The pedals' side-posts have a striking, sleek look, while the beater cam has a large "900 P" imprinted on its side.

Functionally, the Chrome Cobras are identical to the standard black Iron Cobra Power Glide models, with a double-chain, offset-cam drive designed to increase power and speed. The Power Glide Twin double pedal features identical beater and spring adjustments on the outer sides of the master pedal side-posts. The pedals' smooth, shiny, metallic footboards use aerospace-quality Oiles bearings instead of ball bearings, making their action quick, quiet, and stable.

There are many gratifyingly adjustable parts on the Cobras. These include precision flathead beater angle, as well as Vari-Pitch beater shaft angle adjustments. My personal faves are the adjustable Speedo-Ring rocker cam and the Quick-Hook feature. The Quick-Hook allows you to quickly pull the spring assembly off the Speedo-Ring for time-sensitive adjustments.

There is no noticeable lag in the action or feel of the slave pedal on the Chrome Cobra double pedal. Universal connections on each end of the lightweight aluminum connecting rod allow for easy adjustments and perfect placement of the slave pedal. A host of other adjustable features (multi-purpose drumkey included) and user-friendly innovations (check the Tama Web site) make the Chrome Cobra single and double pedals outstanding choices for the discriminating player. And as an attractive bonus, each pedal comes in a lightweight yet durable aluminum road case, which is a much more sophisticated ride than the standard black plastic case. Upscale, baby!

It's a sure bet that this high-end, limited-edition bass drum pedal promotion will sell out quickly. Tama is making only 2,000 Chrome Cobra Power Glide single pedals available worldwide, with only 1,000 available in the US. They'll offer 4,000 Power Glide double pedals worldwide, with 2,000 available in the US. So if you're thinking seriously about purchasing a Chrome Cobra, don't think too long, or they'll be long gone.

The Incredible Shrinking Stand

According to Tama drum product manager Terry Bissette, there's a trend shift going on concerning snare drum sales. Deeper snares are making a comeback, while shallow-drum sales are declining. Drums of $6\frac{1}{2}$" and even 8" depths are starting to sell in greater numbers. To accommodate this swing, Tama has introduced the HS700WN snare stand.

Why a special snare stand? Because over the past ten or so years, many companies addressed the piccolo trend by altering their snare stands to accommodate drums with shallower depths—and, in some cases, smaller diameters. As a result, most snare stands these days don't offer the flexibility of a comfortable lower setting. They're just too tall.

The HS700WN snare stand base has a unique "Hi-Low" design that provides the flexibility

of a low-base snare stand while still being tall enough to accommodate shallower and smaller-diameter drums. The bottom half of the base shaft shifts upwards into the upper half as you lower the double-braced legs. (This creates the illusion that the stand is "disappearing.") The Hi-Low base allows a snare drum to sit 38 mm (approximately 1 1/2") lower than a conventional snare stand.

Another nice feature of this stand is that you can fold the legs up to transport it comfortably. If Tama had simply shortened the base tube and lowered the collar where the legs meet the shaft, the legs would only fold partially. The stand would not collapse for easy pack-up.

The fine details of the HS700WN snare stand are impressive as well. The snare basket accommodates drums from 12" to 15" in diameter. I personally dig the large, easy-to-adjust circular plastic knob that tightens the basket around the drum. The basket is attached to the upper half of the stand using Tama's versatile Omni-ball mounting system, which allows quick and secure angle adjustments. The unequally spaced basket arms eliminate contact between the arms and the snare strainer and butt, whether the snare drum is an eight- or ten-lug model. The snare basket also rotates independently, so there's no need to loosen the basket in order to position the strainer where you want it.

The basket also features "Escape Claws," which are rubber cushions that support the snare drum with a "floating" design for improved resonance. They're also intended to help reduce fatigue on the arms and wrists by softening the impact of heavy snare drum playing.

Tama has also improved the stand's durability by inserting nylon washers into the leg stand joints, making the action of collapsing the legs very smooth. You couldn't ask for a more versatile, user-friendly snare stand.

Wrap-Up

There you have it: the eye-catching elegance and proven quality of the limited-edition Chrome Cobras (complete with stylish case), and the innovative, durable, and versatile HS700WN snare stand. It's a pretty well proven fact that you get what you pay for when it comes to drum hardware. Given Tama's track record for top quality in this area, you can count on these reasonably priced investments to deliver dependable service for years to come. And remember, the early bird catches the Cobra.

THE NUMBERS

HP900PC Chrome Cobra Power Glide single pedal $315.99
HP900PTWC Chrome Cobra Power Glide double pedal $665.99
(Each pedal comes with an aluminum road case.)
HS700WN snare stand $139.99
(215) 638-8670, www.tama.com

Quick Looks

Evans EMAD 2

The EMAD 2 is a twin-ply version of Evans' popular EMAD self-muffling bass drum batter head. It's designed to offer all of the features of the original, with some additional characteristics of its own.

The hippest feature is the Externally Mounted Adjustable Damping system that gives the head its name. This is a foam muffling ring that sits inside a plastic holding sleeve that's attached to the outside of the head for easy access. You have your choice of 1 1/2"- or 3/4"-wide rings—or no ring at all—for more or less muffling. Quick, easy, and effective.

Comparing the EMAD 2 to the single-ply version, Evans says that the new model has "boosted low end, controlled sustain, maximized durability, and enhanced attack," and that it "eliminates the need for additional damping." I agree with the first three claims. Twin-ply heads provide a deeper fundamental tone than single-ply heads do. The muffling rings certainly control sustain, making the drum nice and fat-sounding without a lot of boominess. And, naturally, a two-ply head is going to be more durable than a single-ply model.

I consider "attack" to be the pointed sound of the beater impacting on the head surface. The EMAD 2 delivers plenty of that, thus supporting the "enhanced attack" claim. But it takes a bit more impact power to get that attack than with a more responsive single-ply head, like a regular EMAD.

As far as not needing any additional damping goes, that would depend on the situation. The large muffling ring dramatically reduces overring. But it leaves lots of "life" in the drum sound, which I consider a good thing. If you were having problems miking the drum, or you just wanted a dryer, punchier sound, you might still want to throw a pillow or other internal muffling into the drum. (Evans makes a nifty adjustable pillow system too.)

If you're looking for a deep-sounding bass drum head with plenty of control, you should give an EMAD 2 a try. Heads are available in 18" ($71), 20" ($74), 22" ($78), and 24" ($85) sizes.
(800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com

Rick Van Horn

Audix Micro Series Drum Mics

Tiny, But Mighty

by Mark Parsons

Audix has released a new series of miniature condenser microphones that are especially well suited to miking drums and percussion. "Ho-hum," you say, perhaps stifling a yawn. "*Another* clip-on mini drum mic?" Nope—not by a long shot.

Not Your Father's Clip-On Drum Mic

Although at first glance the Audix Micros look pretty conventional, they're actually groundbreaking. To begin with, when you look at the picture of the tiny mic, you're looking at the whole thing. No additional power adaptor or electronic circuitry lives downstream, connected by a cable. And speaking of cables, the one on the Micros has a mini-XLR female at the mic end and a standard XLR male connector on the other. These two factors alone put these mics into a category of their own. According to Audix, they're the world's smallest condensers with an integrated preamp and detachable cable.

The Micros' preamp circuitry is the same as that of the Audix SCX25A large-diaphragm studio condenser, which is quickly becoming an industry standard for professional recordings of pianos, drum overheads, acoustic guitars, and vocals.

Model Variations

There are three basic models in the Micro Series, and each is available in a few variations, depending on polar pattern.

The M1245 is just under $^1/_2$" in diameter by approximately $1^7/_8$" in length (roughly 12 mm by 45 mm, hence the name). It's available in both cardioid and hypercardioid versions. The only visible differences between the two are the small symbols for either polar pattern, which are printed on the capsule in gray.

The M1290 is physically identical to the M1245, except that it's twice as long. It's available as a cardioid, hypercardioid, supercardioid, or omni. And it's designed to have a little more extension on the bottom end. (Its stated response goes down to 40 Hz versus 80 Hz for the M1245.)

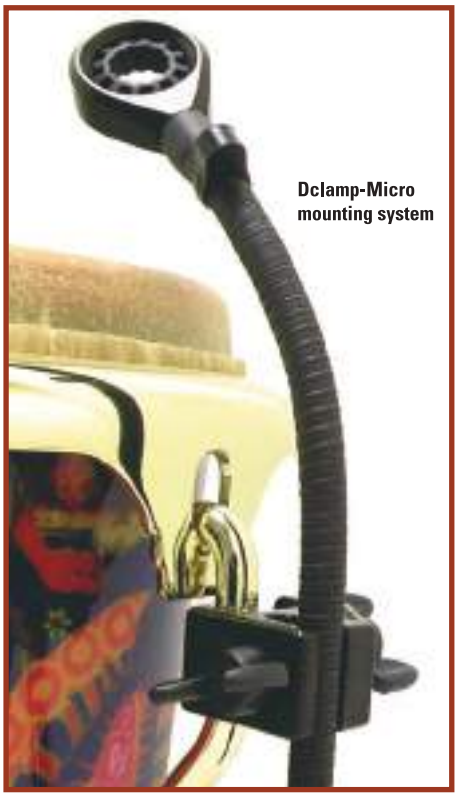
Both of these mics are fairly sensitive, yet they can take SPLs up to 138 dB. Then there's the lower-output 1244, which can take up to 144 dB. It's specifically designed for close-miking drums and other high-level sources. But for the model number engraved into the body, it's identical to the M1245, and is available in cardioid or hypercardioid.

All the Micros share the same basic construction. They're built on brass bodies, with a matte black finish that gives them an unobtrusive, professional appearance. The capsules are threaded onto the bodies, and they're field-replaceable.

The 1245 comes in a nylon pouch; the 1290 comes in a wooden case. Both include a mic stand adaptor. The 1244—due to its designed application—comes with both the Dvice-Micro and Dclamp-Micro. The former consists of a quick and clever spring-loaded hoop clamp along with a gooseneck and miniature shock-mount, while the latter (also with gooseneck and shock-mount) lets you clamp the mic to the tension hook of a hand drum. Each Micro comes with a 12' mini-XLR to standard XLR cable.

In Use

We tested the most drum-specific models in the Micro series: the M1244 (both cardioid and hypercardioid) and the M1290 cardioid. We used the 1290s with Audix's new MicroBoom, which is an innovative ultra-light carbon-fiber mic boom with integrated connectors at each



Dclamp-Micro mounting system

end. (More about it later.)

As we tested the Micros on various parts of the drumset, we occasionally ran them next to other mics that are often used in similar applications. Except for overhead applications, these were typically dynamic mics.

We started with the 1244 (cardioid), mounted to a 12" tom via the Dvice-Micro. This clamp made attaching the mic to the drum a snap. The spring-loaded jaws hook over the drum hoop, and you're there. The grip isn't as vice-like as a mount that has to be hand-tightened for each drum, but all of the Dvices held well throughout the review period with no slipping. And their convenience factor makes them exceptionally appealing.

We mounted the 1244 a few inches above the head, looking down at an angle over the hoop. The sound was clear, present, and natural, with a strong, realistic fundamental on the bottom and very good transients on top. Equally pleasing was what *wasn't* present in the sound. There was no artificial boominess on the lower end, as with some dynamics. Nor was there any harsh, splatty top end, as sometimes happens with small electret condensers. A typical small dynamic used in this application generally has a little more mid-bass boost, but suffers from a lack of articulation as compared to the 1244 (which had great clarity). Other mini condensers are occasionally lean on the bottom.

The little condenser's clarity and fidelity was made apparent by the bleed from the rest of the kit. As an example, the kick/snare/hat bleed from the 1244 when mounted on a tom sounded very natural and musical. (The off-axis response was linear, and the transient response was very good.) Since most mics on a drumkit will pick up the entire kit to some degree, this is an important attribute when it comes to creating an overall pro-quality sound.

The story was similar on a 16" tom. We got a very nice, clear, clean tone, with a strong-yet-natural fundamental and great stick attack. (And again, the quieter off-axis sounds—like the foot "chicks" from the hats—had a very "real" and high-fidelity sound to them.) Same thing on the snare: With the mic in close proximity to the drum, we not only got great reproduction of the snare rattle but also some good beef on the bottom.

At this point we mounted the 1244 on a conga using the Dclamp, which worked like a charm. Frankly, I thought there was no way this tiny condenser could keep up with a good dynamic, which is my usual choice for this application. Well, the 1244

M1290

held its own, and then some. The Micro not only had great articulation as expected, it also yielded a nice, warm bottom end.

In a few test applications we compared the cardioid version of the 1244 to the hypercardioid version. The difference was subtle. With the hypercardioid capsule, the mic had a bit better rejection to the sides, primarily in the 60° to 120° off-axis region. Sonically, they're *very* close, so using both types on the same kit wouldn't make certain drums stand out or sound dissimilar. The hypercardioid version is just a hair leaner in the bass and lower mids, and maybe a tad brighter on top. Given these two factors, I might favor that version slightly on a snare drum (to keep out hat bleed), but it's a close call.

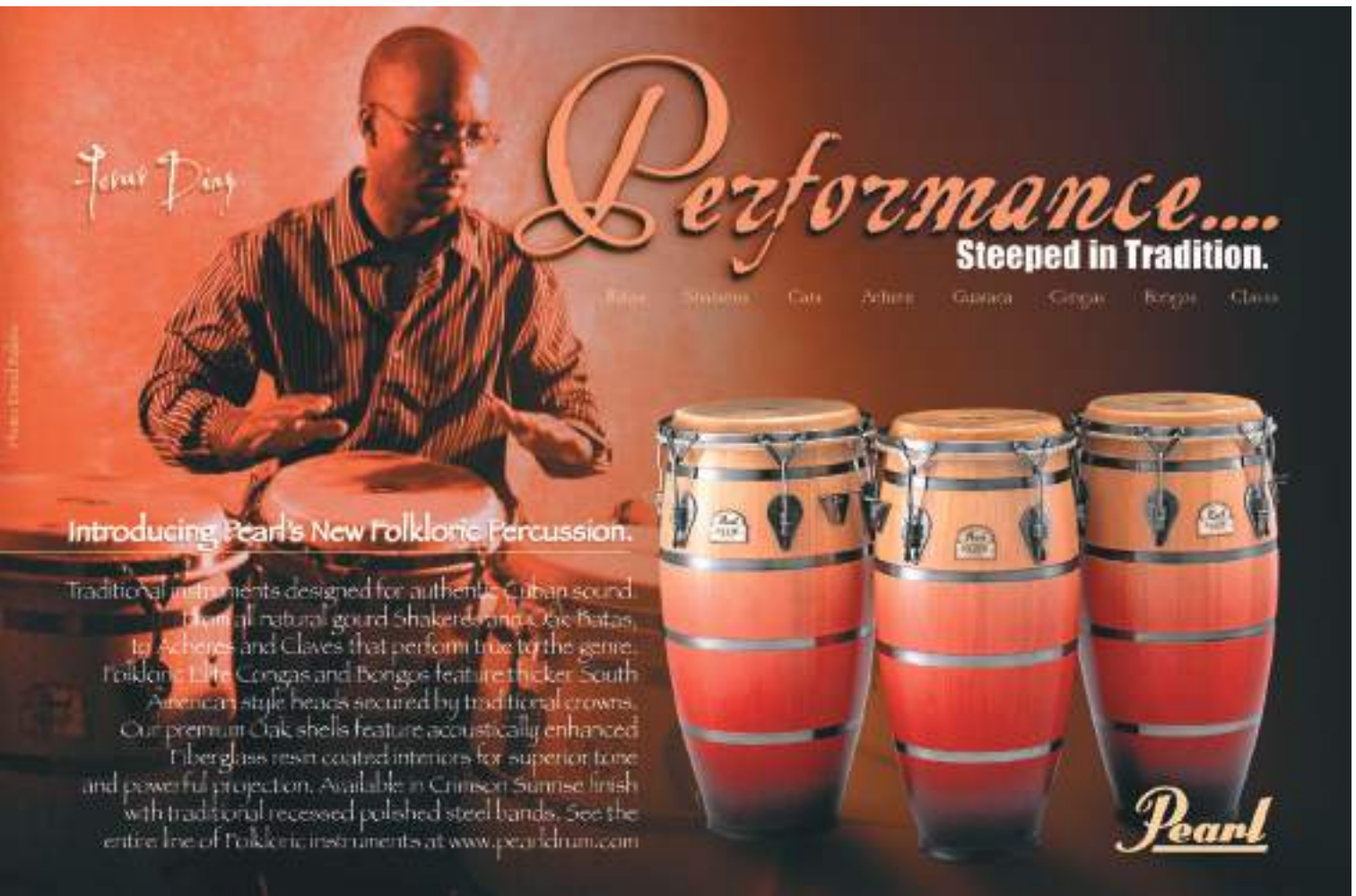
Microboom fitted with M1290

Sonic Booms

When it was time for overheads, we broke out the MicroBooms. The MicroBoom is a 50" long, ultra-slender ($^1/_4$"-diameter) carbon-fiber mic boom that weighs only $2^1/_2$ ounces. It has mini-XLR connectors at each end, which are connected to each other by a high-quality Mogami shielded cable that runs through the inside of the MicroBoom. A swiveling stand adaptor allows you to attach the MicroBoom to any mic stand, and the mic end of the boom has a short gooseneck integrated into it, allowing you better control over the mic position and angle. It's a very well–thought out design, and it provides a nearly invisible way to mount any Micro Series microphone almost anywhere.

Our review MicroBooms came with 1290 cardioids, which turned out to be an excellent choice. We attached the MicroBooms to a pair of standard mic stands and positioned the mics over the drumset as a closely spaced but not quite coincident pair, angled away from each other for good separation. Then we placed an Audix D6 approximately 16" in front of the kick drum.

There was no tweaking of the place-



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NEIL PEART THOMAS LANG GREGG BISSONETTE

ment. The whole thing took just a minute or two. Then we recorded a few minutes of groove, just to check that the levels were close before we did more serious testing. Well, *stop right there*.

Getting More With Less

We've all heard the classic formula for a great drum sound: "Great drums, great room, great mics, and don't mess with it too much." The 1290s gave us a chance to put that formula to the test. The kit had fresh heads and was tuned. The room was kind to drums: relatively ambient but not out-of-control, and big enough to allow the sound to "breathe."

And the mics? The playback was totally flat and dry: zero EQ, zero compression, no effects whatsoever. We just brought up the three faders—and the sound that came from the monitors was stunning. The toms were strong and deep, without sounding boomy or muddy. The cymbals were clear and present without any harshness or "spit" on top. And the snare was *there*. Assuming you were looking for a big, somewhat ambient drum sound, you could make a pro-quality record with just those three mics and no processing at all.

I wanted a second opinion, so I had other folks (a singer and a drummer) listen. They agreed that the drum sound rocked. I was so enamored of the sound that I felt the need for a reality check. I ran the 1290s against mics that I knew were great overheads: a pair of German-made small-diaphragm condensers that cost three times what the 1290 sells for. And the results? They were definitely on the same level quality-wise. The differences were more a matter of taste than of one being "better" than the other. The 1290 might be a hair shyer in the bottom octave and a bit smoother on top. But you'd be hard pressed to differentiate between them in a full mix.

Of course, some styles of music require a more controlled, tighter sound than can be captured by just a pair of overheads and a kick mic. Miking the kit with a full compliment of Micros would give you all the options. You can close mic with the 1244s for individual control of each drum, and add the overheads to taste. Or start with an organic sound, and then add the close mics as necessary.

Final Impressions

I've listened to a number of mini condenser mics, and my usual impression is, "For such little mics, they sound pretty darned good." This was different. If you didn't look at the Audix Micros, you'd think you were hearing very high-quality standard-sized mics. But the Micro's *are* tiny, so besides the great sound you get the very large convenience that goes with their very diminutive size. They're not the most inexpensive mics in their class. But from what I've heard so far, they just might be the best.

THE NUMBERS

1244 (cardioid)	**$379.00**
(includes Dvice-Micro & Dclamp-Micro)	
1244 (hypercardioid)	**$399.00**
(includes Dvice-Micro & Dclamp-Micro)	
1290 (cardioid)	**$399.00**
1290 (hypercardioid)	**$429.00**
MicroBoom with 1290 (cardioid)	**$579.00**
MicroBoom with 1290 (hypercardioid)	**$599.00**
Dvice-Micro	**$29.95**
Dclamp-Micro	**$29.95**

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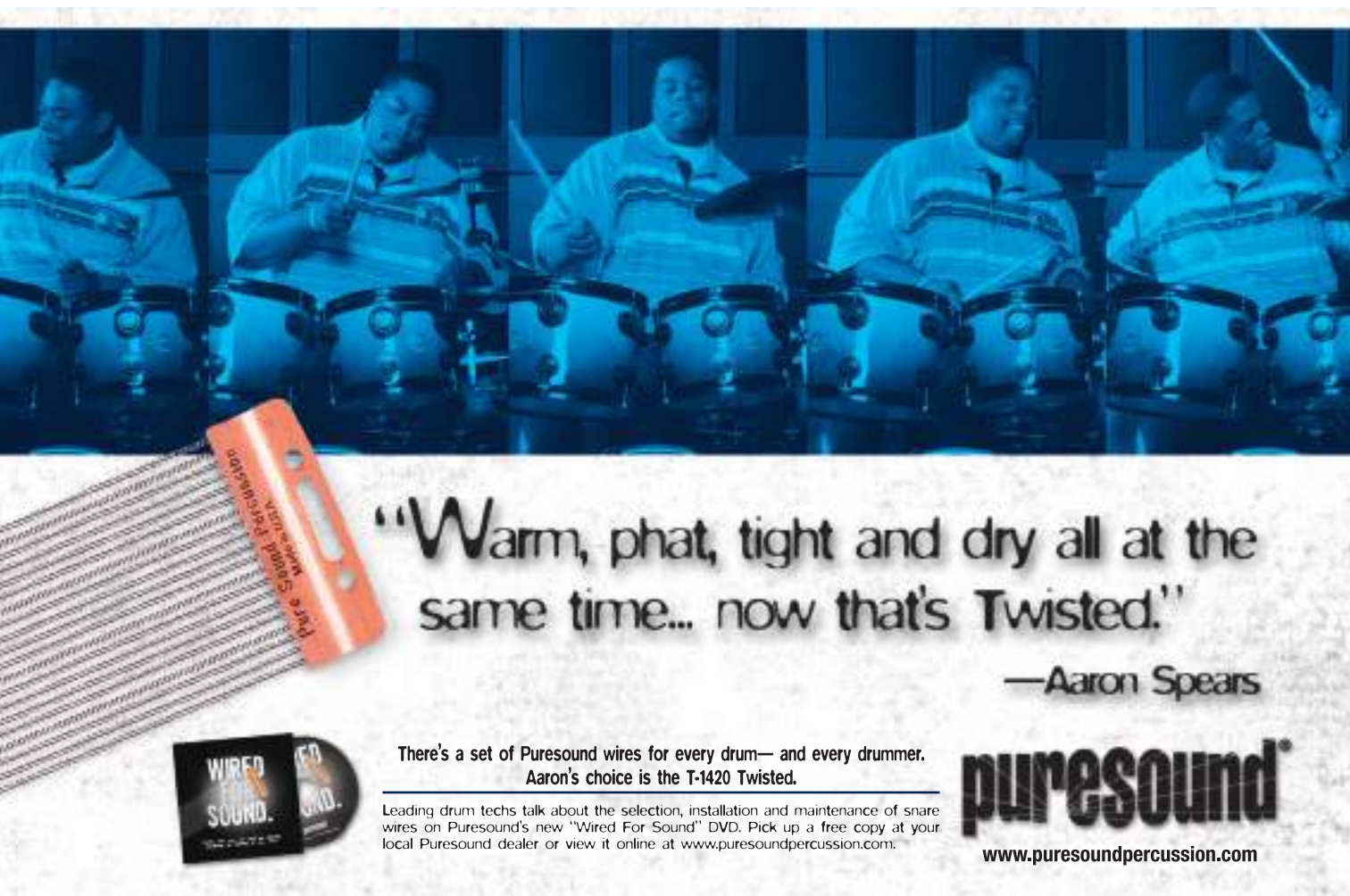

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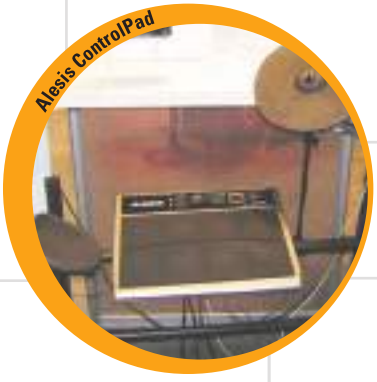
Hot Stuff From SUMMER NAMM

text and photos by Lauren Vogel Weiss

This year's Summer National Association Of Music Merchants (NAMM) trade show was hot for several reasons. To begin with, it was held July 14–16 in Austin, Texas. But beyond that, new and exciting items created plenty of heat on the show floor. Here's an overview of the sizzling stuff.

<< ALESIS

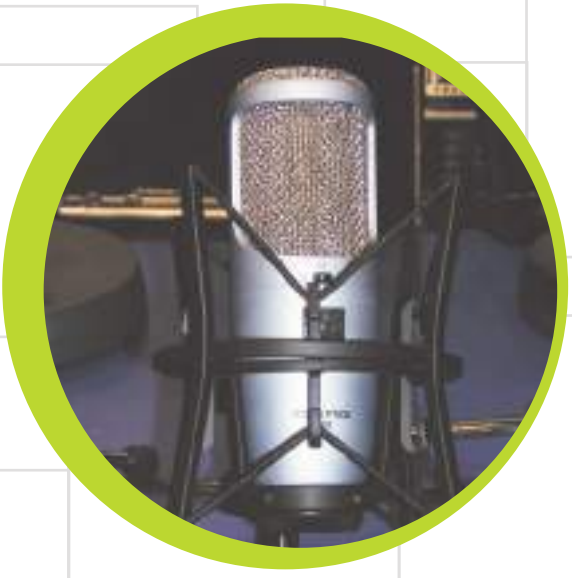
The Alesis ControlPad USB/MIDI Percussion Controller can be played with hands or sticks, and can be interfaced with PC or Mac. The Trigger I/O is an electronic percussion interface with MIDI and USB, with ten TRS trigger inputs for single- or dual-zone triggering.
www.alesis.com


Alesis ControlPad

Trigger I/O Interface

<< AKG ACOUSTICS

AKG showed a new line of condenser microphones, including the Perception 400, a dual-diaphragm, multi-pattern mic useful for drum overheads.
www.akg.com/us



<< AUDIO-TECHNICA

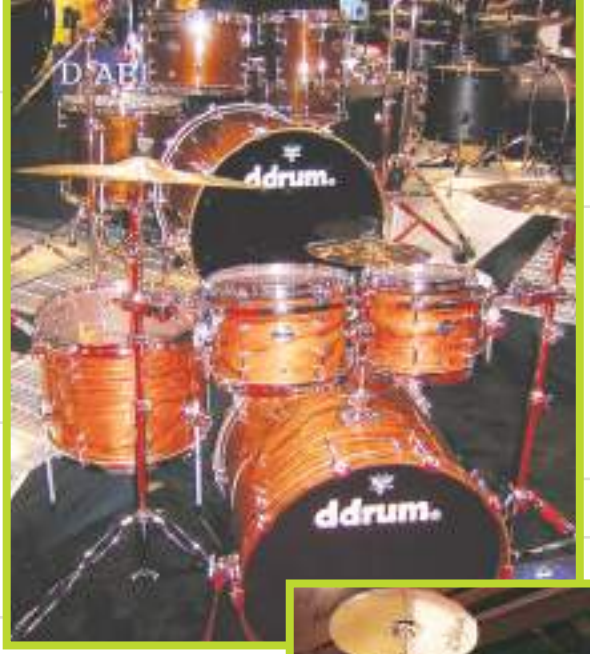
Audio-Technica debuted the next generation of Artist Series microphones. The ATM250DE ($549) has dynamic and condenser elements in one mic body for kick drum use. The ATM250 ($329) is an updated ATM25 hypercardioid condenser mic for toms or kick drums, the ATM350 ($449) is a clip-on model for toms and percussion, and the ATM450 ($369) is a side-address pencil-like condenser for hi-hats and snare.
www.audio-technica.com

<< BASIX

The Basix Lacquer kit (DYP-605) has poplar shells and 600 series hardware, and comes in Purple Burst, Rust Orange, and Cuban Tobacco finishes. It retails for $699. The Rock kit (CUVR06) features an 18x24 bass drum and comes in Red Fade or Silver Sparkle lacquer finishes at $1,095.
www.basixpercussion.com

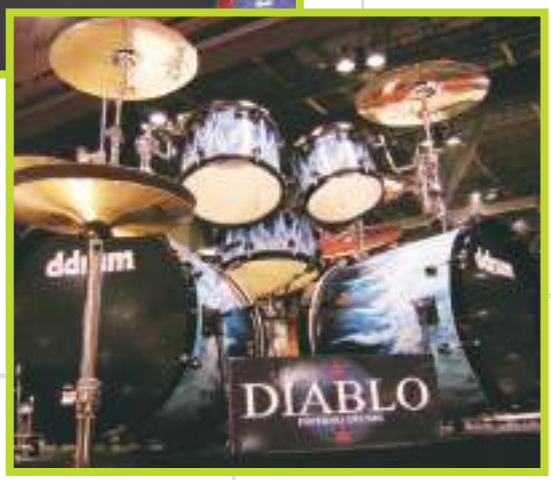
BEAT OF THE DRUM >>

Spider cowbells from Beat Of The Drum feature a wingnut-free mounting system that prevents slipping or rotating, while promoting bell resonance. The manufacturer also offers a variety of stands and clamps for the bells, along with a pedal kit that mounts on any pedal and holds a drumstick to hit the bell.
www.rockdrumming.com



<< DDRUM

Dios series exotic wood drums from ddrum now come in African bubinga (lower set) and North American walnut (upper), for $3,200. Diablo Inferno double bass kits feature RockenWraps with photo-realistic flame graphics, at $1,999.
www.ddrum.com



BUDDY RICH DRUM COMPANY >>

The new Buddy Rich Drum Company displayed a drumkit built to Buddy's own specifications, featuring a 14x24 bass drum, a 9x13 rack tom, two 16x16 floor toms, and a matching 5x14 snare drum. The kit features 8-ply all-maple shells, vintage "Beavertail" lugs, a vintage-style "Rail Consolette" tom mount, two shell-mounted cymbal holders, and a classic White Marine Pearl finish. (Black Pearl, Blue Pearl, Red Sparkle, and Silver Sparkle are also available.) List price is $2,250 with hardware, and $1,995 without.
cs@adelphia.net

DRUMNETICS >>

The totally springless Rapidymium bass drum pedal from Drumnetics works off of opposing magnetic polarity provided by rare-earth neodymium-type magnets. The pedal sells from $289 to $329.
www.drumnetics.com

<< EVANS

Evans introduced EC2 coated heads in sizes from 6" to 18", as well as EC snare heads from 10" to 14" (with and without a "reverse dot" made with the same material as the ring).
www.evansdrumheads.com

GRETSCH >>

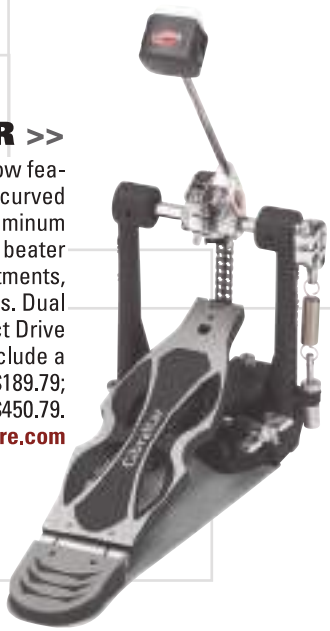
Gretsch is offering limited-edition Renown Purewood Mahogany drumsets, as well as two new snare drums in Solid Aluminum and Solid Steel (the heaviest Gretsch snare drum ever).
www.gretsch.com

<< GATOR CASES

This hardware bag (GP-HDWE-1436-PE) from Gator doesn't sag when loaded, thanks to a ridged polyethylene base. The bag also features reinforced carry handles and recessed in-line roller wheels.
www.gatorcases.com

GIBRALTAR >>

Intruder pedals from Gibraltar now feature balanced pedal boards, curved frames for support and rigidity, aluminum stabilizer plates, independent beater angle and footboard height adjustments, and side-mounted hoop clamps. Dual Chain, Strap Drive, and Direct Drive options are available. All pedals include a carry bag. Single pedals list for $189.79; double pedals are priced at $450.79.
www.gibraltarhardware.com



<< HQ PERCUSSION

The HQ RealFeel Snare Cartridge Pad ($74.99) has a removable 9" cartridge for a "snare on/snare off" effect.
www.hqpercussion.com

HORNETS >>

Hornets is a new drumstick company whose designs combine art with ergonomics and functionality. The four regular models (7A, 5A, 5B, and 2B) plus the specialty rods feature contoured grips, O-rings fitted into the butts, and colored finishes.
www.hornetsdrumsticks.com

<< LP PERCUSSION

LP introduced a bowl-shaped Aspire tunable djembe ($299) in three different finishes, including green tie-dye.
www.lpmusic.com

<< LUDWIG

The first all-maple outfits in Ludwig's Accent CS line feature a high gloss natural finish, solid Ludwig-style lugs, insulated bass drum claw hooks, double-braced legs, and a chain-pull bass drum pedal with a solid rock plate. List price is $1,464.

Accent CS all-maple kit

Accent CS Custom Elite with Blue Ice finish

Ludwig has also added Cherry Glitter Burst (red fade to black) and Blue Ice (light blue to dark blue) high-gloss finishes to its Accent CS Custom Elite series with birch shells. List price is $1,233.
www.ludwig-drums.com

MAPEX >>

A Crimson Swirl wrapped finish is new to Mapex's QR entry-level series.
www.mapexdrums.com

<< PEACE

Peace debuted an 8x14 all-maple snare drum with brass lugs, Remo heads, and a Black Sparkle/Flame finish.
www.peacedrum.com

<< RHYTHM ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY

RET introduced the Accent Series, which is designed for drummers interested in triggering loops without sacrificing the feel of an acoustic kit.
www.retpercussion.us

<< ROC-N-SOC

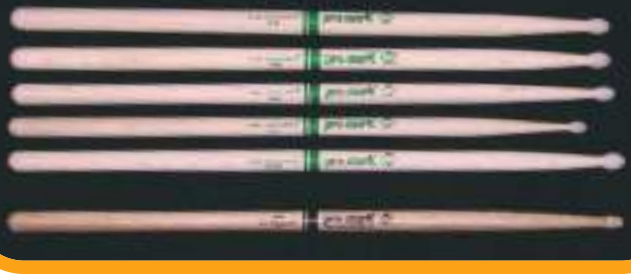
GRIPP-ETs from Roc-N-Soc are rubber tubes that fit on drumsticks to turn them into instant "mallets" or be rolled to form a practice tip. SOC-ETs are designed for electronic drums. A packet of six (mixed sizes or all one size) retails for $3.49.
www.rocnsoc.com

<< PROEL USA

Proel USA displayed Tamburo Ash drums, with shells made from six layers of ash and poplar. The five-piece sets come in blue, black, and amber finishes, and retail for $699.
www.proelgroup.com

<< PRO-MARK

Pro-Mark's hickory Stinger model is now available in oak. A Chris Adler (Lamb Of God) Autograph stick (TX5AXW) is new, and 7A wood- ($12.50) and nylon-tip ($12.95) models have been added to the Natural series.
www.promark.com



<< ROLAND

The PM-30 is Roland's new personal monitor system for electronic drums. Its subwoofer can turn into a full-range speaker, and its two satellite speakers can be attached to regular mic stands and turned to face the audience in small venues.
www.rolandus.com

<< SKB

SKB introduced a new mid-sized drum hardware case (SKB-DH3315W) for drummers packing smaller, lighter hardware into tight spaces.
www.skbcases.com

<< SLAPSTIK

The Slapstik's unusual design—the tip is cut off and reattached by a flexible coupling—is mainly intended for playing two-handed hi-hat patterns with one hand. But it offers a variety of playing possibilities on a kit.
www.theslapstik.com

<< SONOR

Sonor's SQ2 series includes new size options, as well as new custom finishes like the Black Sparkle Fade shown here.
www.sonor.com

<< TAMA

Tama is offering limited-edition Starclassic Performer Flashback kits in Citrus Mod Oyster and Psyche Red Oyster finishes. They also revived the Imperialstar name for a new entry-level series. The five-piece 100% poplar kit—complete with hardware, throne, and German-made brass cymbals—lists for $985.99.

Tama's Warlord Collection snare drums (Praetorian, Spartan, Masai, and Valkyrie) involve different shell materials and a new lug design featuring Swarovski crystals.
www.tama.com

Starclassic Performer Flashback kit

Re-introduced Imperialstar entry-level kit

Warlord Collection snare drums

<< SPAUN

A black-and-white checkerboard finish set this Spaun kit apart.
www.spaundrums.com

<< STAGG

Stagg introduced tubular stainless-steel drum and cymbal stands. They're much lighter than chrome steel models, and are said to be much stronger.
www.staggmusic.com

<< YAMAHA

Yamaha introduced Tour Custom drums with all-maple shells and 60° bearing edges. The drums, made in Yamaha's Indonesian facility, come in Brown Sunburst, Black Onyx, Sakura White, and Ocean Blue finishes.
www.yamahadrums.com

<< TAYE

Taye showcased a new Go Rack for the compact Go Kit, which would be ideal for gigging drummers playing in small venues.

www.tayedrums.com

<< VIC FIRTH

Vic Firth offered Emil Richards' Maraca Mallet (which combines a staccato timpani mallet and a maraca handle, at $47.50), Kidsticks designed for the very young drum-set player ($7.95), and the Corpsmaster ScoJo, Scott Johnson's practice stick with a rubber tip design ($26.95).

www.vicfirth.com

<< VATER

Vater's new "DSK Tour" ($13.50) is a scaled-down version of David Silveria of Korn's original DSK model. The shorter length provides a quick feel when moving around the kit, while the heavy shoulder provides durability for aggressive performances.

Vater's Drink Holder ($19.95) securely fastens to cymbal stands with an easy-to-turn knob. The inside diameter of $3\frac{1}{2}$" holds most drinks, cups, and sports bottles.

www.vater.com

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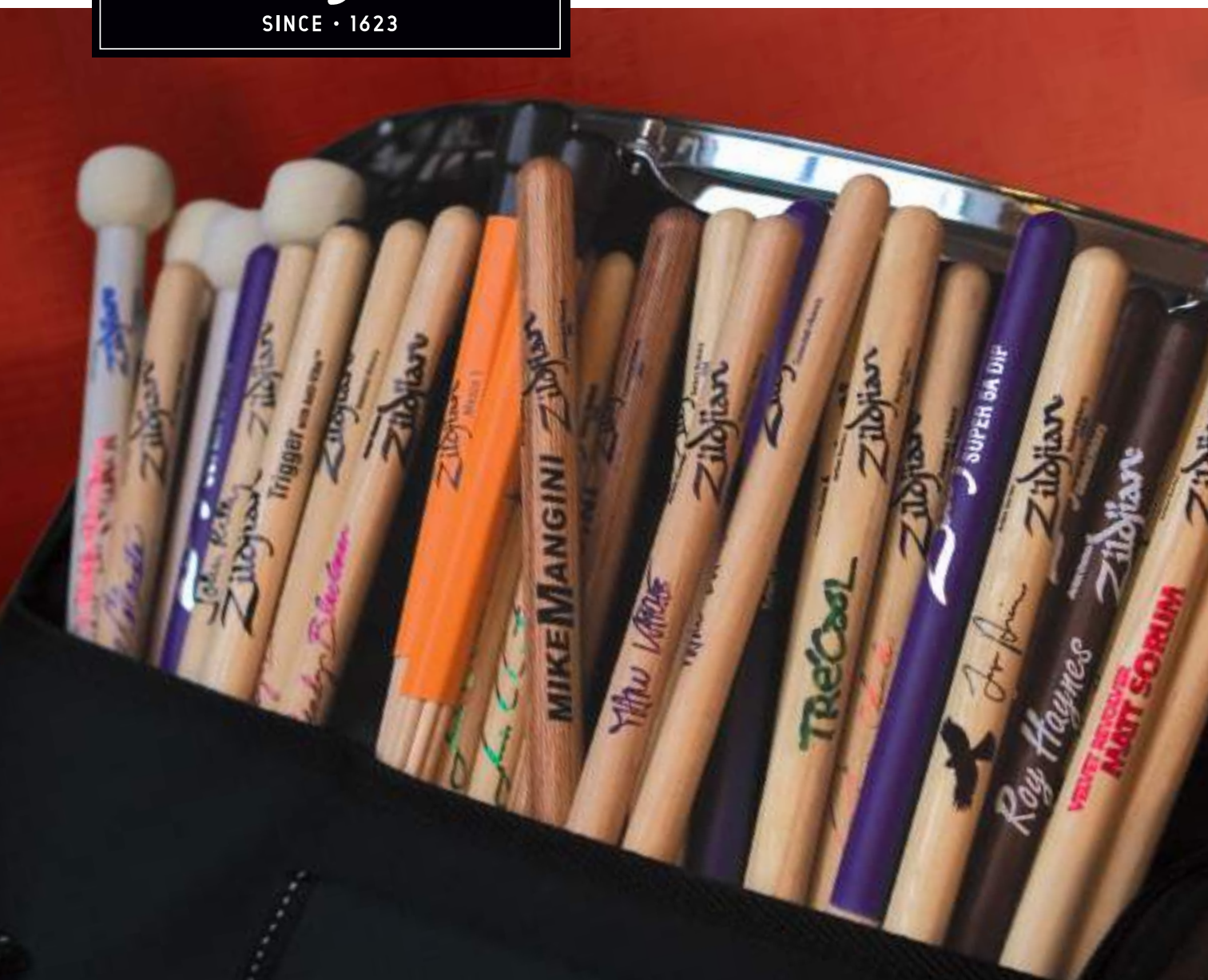

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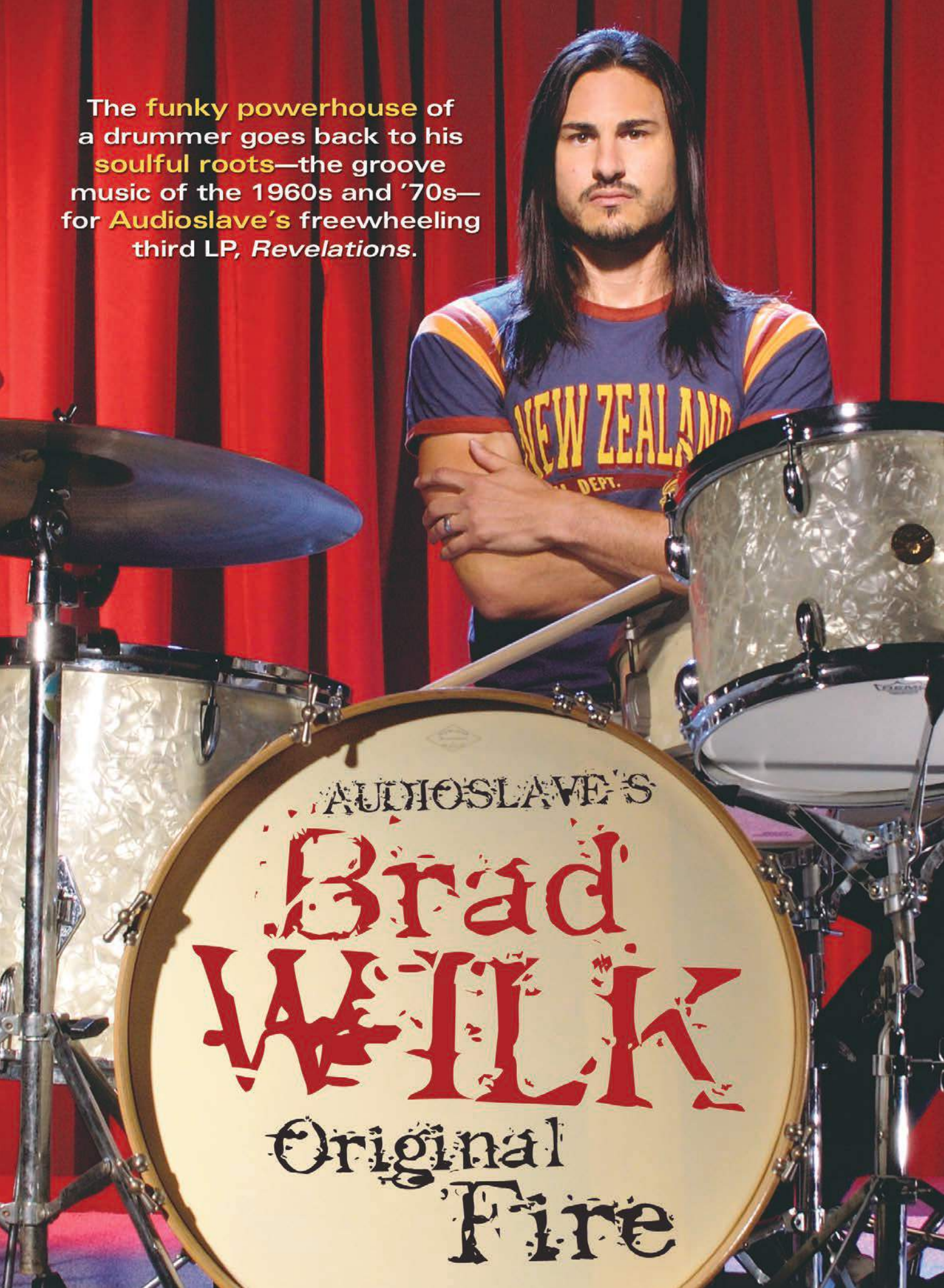


The funky powerhouse of a drummer goes back to his soulful roots—the groove music of the 1960s and '70s—for Audioslave's freewheeling third LP, *Revelations*.

AUDIOSLAVE'S Brad WILK

Original Fire

For a guy who can really punish his drums, Brad Wilk has always been hip-shakingly funky. In 2002, he told *MD*, "I've listened to a ton of old organic funk. I would go to sleep with James Brown records on repeat." Indeed, there's always lots of groovy nuance in Wilk's work, whether it's a bit of behind-the-beat pull that he calls "being on the back end" or a devastating chunk of bass-snare-hats syncopation.

The hip-hop bent of Brad's former group, Rage Against The Machine, allowed the drummer to revel in that syncopation, but he had to smooth things out a bit for the more straight-ahead hard rock of Audioslave's first two releases, their self-titled 2002 debut and 2005's *Out Of Exile*.

Wilk's beats still breathed deeply with airy ghost notes and perfect back-end placement, but the funk vibe was much more subtle. Now, however, on the new *Revelations*, Brad explodes in a powerful display of grooviness. And, conversely, a groovy display of power.

Story by Michael Parillo • Photos by Alex Solca

"This whole record just sounds like the dog is off the leash. And I'm into that."

Revelations bears all the Audioslave hallmarks—huge, heavy riffs and sonically experimental solos from guitarist Tom Morello, deep-pocket bass lines from Tim Commerford, emotionally edgy vocals from Chris Cornell—along with what for many fans would be an unlikely influence: '60s and '70s soul and R&B. For Wilk, though, it's perfectly natural that old-school groove ideas would seep into the Audioslave sound. "We're just doing what we know how to do," he says. "That's stuff we grew up listening to. There aren't a lot of musicians that play that style anymore. They're out there, but it seems like it's a dying breed. That's why it's so important that we keep that history alive."

Just take a listen to the ultra-slinky drumming on "One And The Same." Brad opens his hi-hat on the upbeats—and adds some tasty tambourine on the downbeats—like a vintage funkster. When it's time to go to the ride cymbal for the guitar break, he plays with confident looseness as he messes around with bell accents and hints of swing. Throughout the album, his parts feel relaxed yet exciting. And he plays some killer intro fills, like the wicked snare-toms lick in the bone-crushing closing track, "Moth."

The freshness of the performances on *Revelations* reflects the fact that Audioslave has gelled into an efficient music-filled unit, eager to release discs at a pace that leaves Rage's somewhat stingy output in the dust. Since *MD* spoke to Wilk on the eve of Audioslave's debut, the band has made national and European touring treks and even headed south—*way* south—to Cuba. The free May 2005 show at the Anti-Imperialist Plaza in Havana, with an audience of over 60,000, marked the first time an American rock band had performed on Cuban soil. That experience, which was captured on the *Live In Cuba* DVD, offered a great dose of inspiration to a bunch of guys who already take their roles, and their success, seriously.

"Music is such a positive way to convey your feelings, no matter what they are," Brad says. "We have a really strong work ethic. I feel like I've never played a half-assed show, and that goes back to the Rage days. As difficult as Rage was, for all the turmoil that was going on until *seconds* before we walked onstage, once we got on that stage everyone would give one hundred ten percent. It was purely a passion-filled musical performance. Because that's all we really have, and that's why I got into this to begin with. The fact that there's a bunch of people who've come to see you play, I don't take that for granted at all."

MD: Last time we spoke, you talked about simplifying for the first Audioslave album, how syncopation that might've worked with Rage didn't feel right. But now it sounds like you've loosened up a bit and are playing a little more.

Brad: I agree. Strangely enough, it wasn't even something we talked about. But the music we were coming up with seemed a lot funkier, and the way Chris started singing over it was different as well. Also, since it was our third record, it's not like we had to make sure it wasn't funky or wasn't like Rage Against The Machine. While this record is funky, it sounds nothing like a Rage record.

MD: You spent a lot of time getting your parts just right for *Audioslave*. Was the process less thought out for you this time?

Brad: When we first got together to make this record, we spent about a month writing the songs, and I think we had around twenty songs to record. What went by a lot quicker this time was the time in the studio. And the time between writing the stuff and going into the studio was a much shorter period. I didn't have time to sit around overthinking parts and whatnot, which I could easily be accused of doing.

MD: You've used percussion overdubs before, but I'm hearing more than ever on the new album.

Brad: There's a *ton* of percussion on this record. That was a lot of fun. After I did the drum parts, [*Revelations* producer] Brendan [O'Brien] and I went down to Guitar Center and grabbed a bevy of percussion and threw it in a box. We went to the studio for a couple days and just sat there doing percussion. I played conga, a lot of shakers, cowbells—lots of different things. I love doing that stuff.

MD: The fat cowbell on "Revelations" really sets up the verse nicely.

Brad: That groove is *way* on the back end too, and a lot of it has to do with, yes, the cowbell. [laughs]

MD: On "One And The Same," you're really digging in and playing upbeats on the hats. It feels so much looser than a lot of the stuff you've done before.

Brad: I agree. It kind of reminds me of Grand Funk Railroad or something. [laughs] This whole record just sounds like the dog is off the leash. And I'm into that. Brendan is really hands-on. He's always out there setting up stuff and twisting knobs, and he really has a knack for getting this fiery sound with us.

MD: Your "Original Fire" pattern is like a Motown beat, with the snare on the quarter notes. It even has handclaps.

Brad: I really enjoy that song. It definitely has an old-school vibe, and it doesn't really sound like anything we've ever done, which is kinda neat.

MD: So you didn't say, "Let's think mid-'60s here" or anything like that when you were making the album?

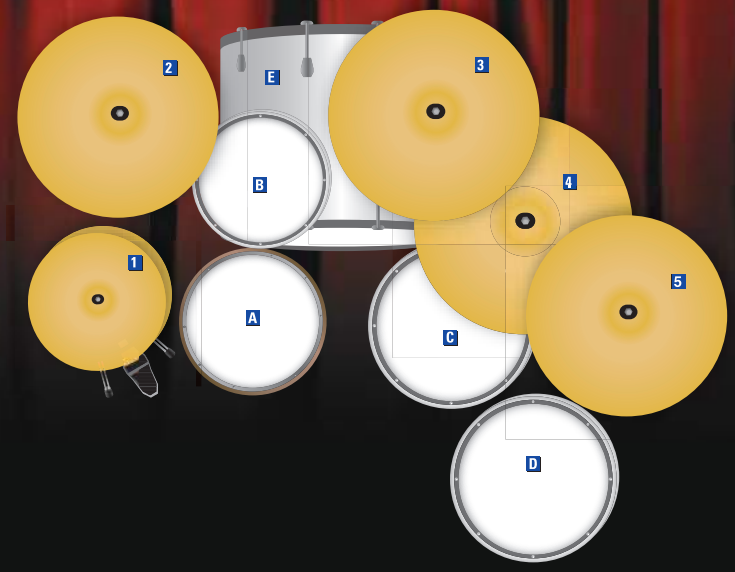
Brad: Absolutely not. It's just what came out.

MD: Another thing that brought my ear into that era is the chorus of "Nothing Left To Say But Goodbye." It's very melodic, and your ride pattern floats along beautifully. Were you thinking about anything specific on that tune?

Brad: When Chris started playing that on

Brad's Audioslave Tour Kit

(Different from vintage kit in photos)



Drums: Gretsch USA Custom (maple)
- **A.** 6½x14 Tama Bell Brass snare
- **B.** 9x12 tom
- **C.** 16x16 floor tom
- **D.** 16x18 floor tom
- **E.** 18x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste
1. 14" Signature Sound Edge hi-hats
2. 18" Signature Power crash
3. 19" 2002 crash
4. 22" 2002 ride
5. 18" Signature Power crash

Hardware: DW, including 9000 series hi-hat and bass drum pedals (medium-tight spring tension, felt beater)

Heads: Remo coated Emperors on snare, tom, and kick batters, Ambassador snare-side, coated Ambassadors on tom bottoms. Snare and toms tuned for song (when recording), bass drum tuned very low and loose

Sticks: Vic Firth 5B model (hickory with wood tip)

ROLLING RIGHT

Wilk's Distinctive Tracks

We asked Brad for his thoughts on some of the memorable songs from studio albums by Rage Against The Machine and Audioslave.

Rage Against The Machine

"Killing In The Name"

When we wrote that, it was like, "Okay, this song has seventeen 'f yous' in it. We're not worried about getting signed, we're not worried about being on the radio." That song was about "I won't do what you tell me," and a lot of people think we were standing on a soapbox. But we were into changing the world for real—music can and does do that.

"Bullet In The Head"

When we first got together, [vocalist] Zack [de la Rocha] was pretty much purely rapping. When we got that end riff where the metal fury comes in, he wasn't doing anything over it. Tim went, "Why don't you do what you used to do in your punk bands and just scream?" And "Bullet in your head!" was what came out. I felt it was undeniable that we were onto something. Zack was just electric.

Evil Empire

"Down Rodeo"

Oh, man—how 'bout *those* lyrics? I love that song. I think it stands out on that record as really musical. It sort of paved the way for *The Battle Of Los Angeles*, which had more songs on that level. Believe it or not, I think that was the first key change we ever had.

acoustic guitar, it sounded really Beatle-y to me. The minute I started playing it, I thought, "I've got to keep this groove sounding like this." There's an ethereal guitar pattern going over it, which helps. But more than anything I was just thinking Ringo Starr.

MD: You said you hit hard on everything on the first Audioslave album, even the softer songs. Is that something you've continued to do?

Brad: No, I've actually gone the opposite way. That's the thing about the studio. I don't think I've ever stuck to one theory, and every time I go into the studio I learn new things.

There's a point where if you're hitting a drum too hard it'll stop resonating. So you've got to find that place that makes the drum resonate to its fullest, if that's what you're looking for. It's not necessarily playing light or hard—it's about finding the sweet spot and doing what's right for the song.

Like on "Nothing Left To Say But Goodbye," I played with a Hot Rod in my left hand, with a nickel taped to the end of it, and in my right hand I used a super-light jazz stick, a 7A or something. That really gave it this lighter feel, and then we put a lot of compression on it so it still has a very large sound. And we used a 24" kick drum on that particular track. You can hear that it's a different kick from the rest of the record. I can, anyway.

MD: Where did you place the nickel on the Hot Rod? On the tip?

Brad: Not on the tip, but right below it.

MD: Oh, so you're hitting with the flat nickel, and you have to hold the stick just right to get the nickel to hit the snare every time?

Brad: Exactly. It's a little magic trick. [laughs]

MD: Did you use a lot of different gear on the album?

Brad: Not too much. Believe it or not, we wound up using the Gretsch kit I got from our last tour. When we were playing the songs for Brendan before we went into the studio, he commented that the drums sounded great. Brendan is definitely a stickler for having great-sounding drums, but we put up my kit in the studio and dug the sound. Saves a lot of money. All the drum-rental places, they're up there. You will *pay* for those great-sounding drums. [laughs]

MD: We're at a very different place in the history of Audioslave than we were the last time we spoke. At that point, you hadn't even played a show. Some critics dismissed the group as not being a "real" band, but by now you've shown otherwise.

Brad: I feel blessed to be able to be in another band and have it be as successful as it is. It's nice to have that connection, to be able to go on to something different with Tom and Tim. The four of us never really thought about whether it was a real band or not—that was left up to the press. To us we were just doing the things bands do. We make records, and we go out onstage and play. That's what bands do. What is "real" anyway?

MD: Have your shows gotten much better with practice?

Brad: It feels like we've really started to click together as a band. Even though it's still the three of us, it's a completely different chemistry with Chris. Once you throw a different person in the mix, it becomes a completely different thing. I really feel like the shows have constantly gotten better.

MD: I want to talk about your trip to Cuba. You've been part of two big-business bands, but it must have felt good to do

"Year Of Tha Boomerang"
I remember thinking, Damn—this drum sound is really *fat*. But as far as the song goes, it has this heavy metal waltz that isn't one of my favorites.

The Battle Of Los Angeles

"Mic Check"
I was using this old 1930s Ludwig kit that was beat to crap—just kick, snare, hi-hat, and cymbal—and we set up in this tiny room. It's a crazy drum sound—really compressed. Zack's rapping is awesome, and the guitar solo has this cool jungle vibe. And I think that was the beginning of the wah bass that Tim uses quite a bit, which is a really interesting sound.

"Sleep Now In The Fire"
When I hear it, I feel like we're in the mid-to-late-'60s. It just has that kind of MC5 vibe: It sounds like it's on fire. It has an uneasiness, with cool verse music that's different from anything we'd done.

Audioslave

"Like A Stone"
At first, I *hated* it. I remember Tim going, "Man, this is a great song." I was like, "Okay, I'm gonna trust you guys." Sure enough, it's one of my favorites on that record. It's haunting, and Tom's solo is incredible. That happens a lot. Usually my favorite records don't strike me so well the first time but wind up really having an effect on me.

"Exploder"
That felt sort of like, Let's see what a Rage song would sound like with Chris Cornell singing over it. Musically it seems like it's in the same vein as something that might've been on *Battle Of LA.*

Out Of Exile

"Out Of Exile"
Tim came up with the bass line in the verse, and it was really funky and kind of tricky. There's a lot going on at the end of the phrase, and I wanted to make sure that stood out more than anything. One time, just before the vocals come in for the second verse, I play a fill that acts with that bass part. Otherwise, I just make room for the bass guitar.

"Doesn't Remind Me"
There's some tom stuff in the verses—that was fun. That's like a campfire song. It was so easy it didn't even seem right to do. [laughs] U2 has proved time and time again that it doesn't necessarily have to be hard to be great, and Larry Mullen Jr. is one of my favorite drummers. That's just a simple song with a catchy chorus and, more importantly, an *unbelievable* video. It's very moving.

Revelations

"One And The Same"
That's another one that sounds like it comes out of the '60s. That's one of the reasons I dig The Raconteurs—they're taking old styles but making them their own. There's sort of been a resurgence. Maybe it's thanks to our beloved Jack Black in *School Of Rock* and other movies that are bringing an interest to that music once again.

"Moth"
Nice little drum intro. The song was written on the second-to-last day in the studio, and we came in the next morning and recorded it. It's one of my favorites. I was really proud of all of us for kicking ass on it in one day.

something that was more about musical and cultural exchange than anything else.

Brad: It was awesome. We had tried to go there with Rage. The fact that we never got to go was upsetting to us, so when the idea of doing this with Audioslave came about, we were all very excited. We were the first band to actually do that, and I just hope we make it back there again. It was so incredible on a cultural level. It was deep and really heavy, and what you hear about Cuba and what Cuba is actually like are completely different.

We were warned that there were going to be hidden cameras in our hotel rooms and people on the floors watching our every move, and this and that, and it was all a bunch of bullshit. We were met by the most gracious people, and the rooms weren't bugged or any of that. There were just really great people, and we were grateful to be there.

There's so much art and so much soul in the people of Cuba. On a spiritual level they seem way further advanced than we are over here. We got to visit a free music school that used to be a country club. Now it's a jazz school. We sat around with these eighteen- and nineteen-year-old kids who were improvising jazz, and we were all completely floored. They were incredible players, and their spirit just seemed to be glowing.

To be able to experience that was amazing. We played a free show in front of almost 70,000 people, and for a lot of them it was their first big concert. It was so interesting, because people were doing everything from moshing to dancing to flag waving. They don't have shows all the time, so it's not like everyone necessarily knew what to do. You know how when you go to a rock show in the States, everybody, weirdly enough, sort of knows what to do? It was refreshing to see so many people in the audience doing so many different things. [laughs]

The hair was standing up on the back of my neck the minute we started. I didn't know what to expect, and to have these people just gravitate toward our music was an incredible vibe, and it was a night that I will *never* forget—a five days I will never forget.

MD: I assume most of the crowd didn't know your music. Was that the case?

Brad: You know, I thought that as well, but a lot of people actually did, because they were singing songs. So I guess the black market is healthy over there. [laughs]

We went to a radio station and talked to one of the DJs for a long time, and he was playing all this obscure Rage Against The Machine and Soundgarden stuff. It was interesting—they have very different impressions of the bands from what the US has, because they're not influenced by the marketing of record companies or whatever. They get the records, period—no singles, no marketing or any of that. They do with them what they will, and they gravitate toward different songs.

MD: Cuba must be an inspiring place for a drummer. Did you get to soak up some percussion or pick up some toys to bring back?

Brad: I didn't actually get to pick up any toys. Instead of taking things out of Cuba, what we did was donate lots of musical instruments—guitar strings, sticks, heads, all this stuff—to that school to help them out. The sad part about the school, and most of Cuba, is that they don't have a lot of money to buy strings and things. They were just rigging stuff up, and there were a lot of broken instruments.

The music I took away from Cuba was

Continued on page 56

BRAD WILK

a revelation of groove

transcribed by Michael Dawson

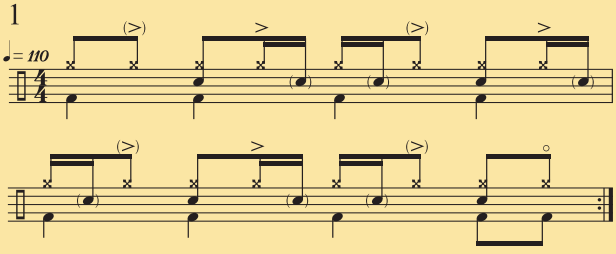
MUSIC KEY

For their third album, *Revelations*, Audioslave brings an old-school R&B vibe to their signature mix of monster riffs and soaring vocals. As a result, Brad Wilk's head-bobbing grooves are more infectious than ever. Here are a few highlights.

"One In The Same"

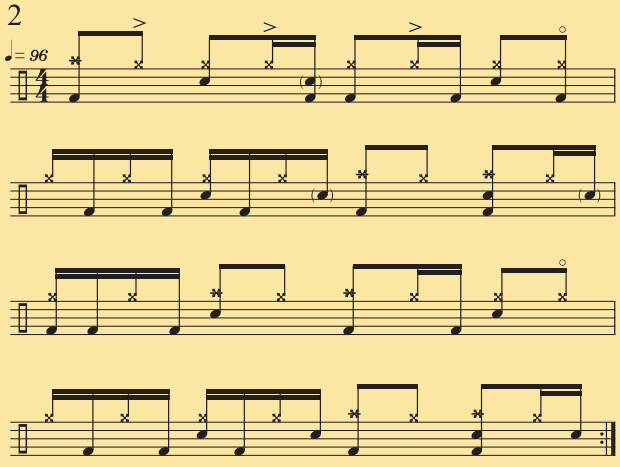
Brad supports Chris Cornell's vocal breakdown near the end of this song with a chest-thumping groove built on quarter-note kicks, slippery ghost notes, and off-beat hi-hat accents. (2:37)

1

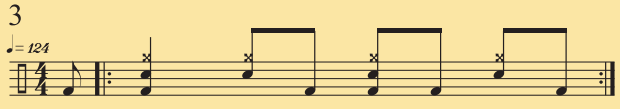


"Sound Of A Gun"

After a brief intro, Wilk unleashes a four-bar pattern that's perfectly orchestrated around one of the band's trademark unison riffs. (0:17)

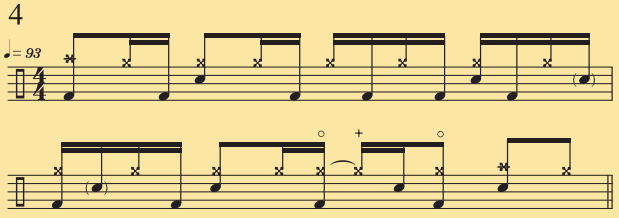
2

"Original Fire"

Brad drives this tune with a vintage quarter-note R&B/soul groove. (0:00)

3

"Somedays"

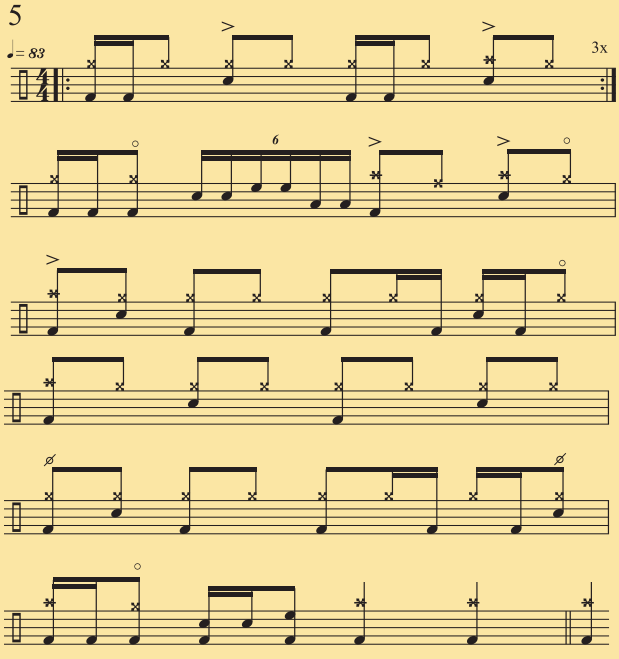
This track contains a quick two-bar drum break that features cool snare/kick interplay and perfectly placed hi-hat barks. (0:11)

4



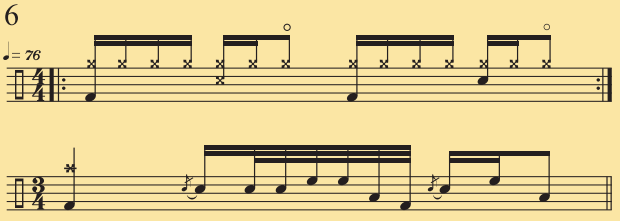
"Jewel Of The Summertime"

Wilk offsets the swampy groove of this song's ending vamp with huge fills and accents. Before the fade out, Brad throws in a monstrous sextuplet run and then flips the beat around with snare accents on the "&" of beat 1. (3:21)

5

"Moth"

The disc's closing track fades in with a slinky 16th-note groove, followed by an explosive fill that leads into one of the band's most epic riffs. (0:00)

6



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BRAD FICKEISEN
the Red Chord
SHANNON LUCAS
ALL THAT REMAINS
VIC FIRTH
WHEN IT MATTERS, ASK FOR VIC FIRTH

Brad Wilk Continued from page 53

basically from the people who were playing out in the streets. And Equis Alfonso was the guy who opened for us, and he had a lot of percussion in his band. He's a percussionist himself. He came out with this big drum and started doing an improv thing with us. What a great guy. Super-talented.

MD: The Cuba DVD was the first time I heard you play songs from your old bands. Have you been doing a bunch of Soundgarden songs?

Brad: On the last tour we did "Rusty Cage," which was kind of insane, "Outshined," "Spoonman," and a Temple Of The Dog song, "Hunger Strike," which I actually got to sing on. That was kind of fun. All that stuff, it's fun to do. In the first few years of the band, we were absolutely *not* going to play our old bands' music, and then we just decided we'd see how it sounded. But to be honest with you, I don't know that it's the right thing to do. It still feels a little bit weird.

MD: So you may or may not do it again?

Brad: If I had a choice, I'd say maybe not. Especially since we have another record. Being a fan of that music, it's awesome. It's a blast, and if any band in Idaho or wherever can get up in a bar and play this song, then why can't the guys that were actually a part of making the song do their version? I don't know, but I still don't know that it's the right thing.

MD: How did you cop Matt Cameron's parts?

Brad: I would listen to the song a few times. I would never play along—I'd just listen. Then I'd go in and play it from memory the way I would play it and not necessarily how Matt would play it.

MD: Your bass drum sound always blows me away. It's so thick. Part of it is just your note placement, but did you use any muffling on *Revelations*?

Brad: I think I had maybe one blanket on the bottom. And on a couple of tracks we did the old John Bonham trick where you cut up a bunch of newspapers into thin strips and put that in the kick drum. It gives it this nice sound that's hard to describe—it sort of fattens it up a little bit.

So it is about that, but placement is definitely *huge*—where Tim is playing and where I'm playing. Where the notes are actually hitting has so much to do with the sonics of a drum. And it's so much about us being together for so long and having that experience with each other that it's not even really thought about as much as it's just *done*, as opposed to back in the day when we were still trying to figure it out.

MD: Almost every tune you play on has a distinctive opening and closing of the hi-hat that becomes a signature part of the groove. Does that get worked out ahead of time?

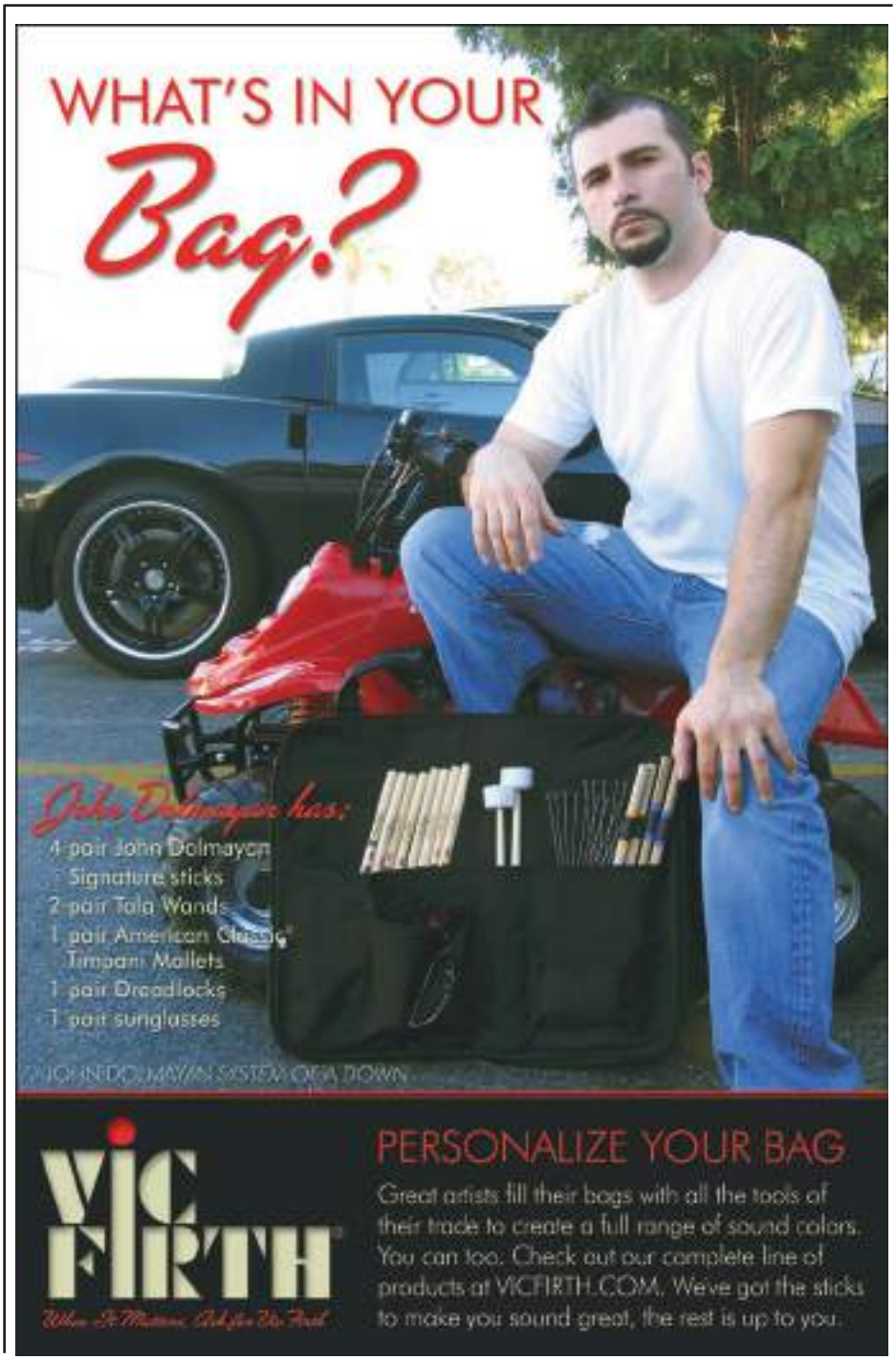
Brad: Definitely. That's just one of those things that makes you who you are. I view the hi-hat almost as a percussion piece—hitting a certain thing to fill in a space—rather than as this thing that's keeping time. I enjoy that too—you listen to those John Bonham parts and he's got it going the whole time, like a locomotive.

MD: Your opening and closing is very precise, when you're actually on the hats, not just playing them with your foot. Maybe it's over a whole note, or over a half note… .

Brad: I remember discovering that when I was about seventeen. I was playing some hi-hat thing, and I would open it up maybe on the "&" of 4, or maybe on 4, and I'd close it just before the 1 and then hit the kick drum. It's hard to explain, but I saw a triangle effect with the open hi-hat going down to a closed hi-hat down to a kick drum note. Those three things are huge, and if you do it right you can make a really distinctive sound and feel. So I was always very attuned to where I would open and close the hi-hat.

I think that's one of the reasons why I play my kick drum so much on the back end of things—I'm waiting for that hi-hat to close. *Just* as it closes, then the kick drum comes. There's a space between that closed hi-hat and kick drum that's like a hiccup or whatever you want to call it, but it adds to the effect of the kick being behind that much more. It's something that's maybe less thought about, but I'm conscious of it.

Playing a song for the first time, I might be doing that because it feels natural. But sometimes I'll take the tape home and I'll realize that though it may feel natural to me, it's not natural for the song. Tapes don't lie. That's when you start messing around with stuff—all the unappreciated



hard drumming work that no one gives a shit about! [laughs]

MD: You're a master of holding back and letting 'em have it a little bit at a time without taking it over the top. It's an abstract comparison, but it reminds me of Frank Sinatra. His performance was perfectly calibrated. He'd make you *need* it, and only then would he really cut loose, and just for a short period. Your drumming strikes me as being that way.

Brad: [laughs] That's funny. I'm going to take that as a compliment.

MD: It's a compliment all right.

Brad: Well, I appreciate that, and I am definitely of that nature. It's really about the song, and it is about holding back. When you do give it to 'em, just make sure it's really tasteful.

MD: Do you ever sit down by yourself and play wild fusion solos or stuff that *isn't* holding back at all?

Brad: Absolutely. Not in a band setting, but I'll totally go off. I got one of those Roland electronic kits, and it has the jazz-band stuff and the tabla settings where you can actually be more musical on the drum-set. I'll spend hours just having fun, and I'll go off a lot more. Also, when Tim and I are just jamming—that's a whole 'nother thing.

MD: I assume you approach the studio and the stage differently.

Recordings

Artist	Album
Rage Against The Machine	The Battle Of Los Angeles
Audioslave	Revelations
Rage Against The Machine	Evil Empire
Rage Against The Machine	Renegades
Audioslave	Out Of Exile
Rage Against The Machine	Rage Against The Machine
Audioslave	Audioslave

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
Led Zeppelin	Physical Graffiti	John Bonham
John Coltrane	A Love Supreme	Elvin Jones
The Who	The Kids Are Alright	Keith Moon
Gang Starr	Daily Operation	samples
De La Soul	Three Feet High	samples
AC/DC	Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap	Phil Rudd
Police	Ghost In The Machine	Stewart Copeland

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Brad Wilk

Brad: Yeah, they're two completely different beasts. The studio is about being focused and getting the best takes you can without overthinking it, and that's a lot harder to do than to say. But that's the key—to keep it fresh and have it sound spontaneous and alive.

When you're playing live, you don't really have to think about it, because that's what's happening—there it is. You have that connection with the band and the audience, and that circle of energy is very real. You can't see it, but you can definitely feel it, and I think when you get that ball of energy going where the crowd's reacting off you and you're reacting off the crowd, and the whole experience becomes bigger than the band or the crowd, those are the times I live for. That's why I'm in music.

MD: Do you spend a lot of time getting sounds? Your drums always sound huge and clear.

Brad: In the studio, especially with Brendan, it's amazing. This time I think we set up the drumkit and within around three and a half hours we were ready to go for the whole session. I've got to credit that to Brendan really knowing what he's doing. But I'll do a lot of tuning on my snare drum. It's actually pretty therapeutic for me to tune my snare a lot, in between songs and whatnot.

MD: Is there a certain sound you're looking for in general, or is it ever changing?

Brad: It's ever changing. It's usually what fits the track. What key is the track in? Where's Tom playing on the neck? Where's Chris singing? What's Tim doing? You've basically got to look at each song as sort of a frequency chart, and you fit in where there's space. That's a big part of having a full sound. The snare drum might be tuned higher in some songs and lower in others.

The studio really is about getting the right sound for the track you're recording. And Tim has such a huge bass sound. It takes up so many frequencies in the spectrum. A lot of times, things clash because of that sound. So I have to really think about it and get the right sounds and the right parts at the right time. And that goes back to the whole Frank Sinatra thing that you were saying—the right time to give it to 'em.

I totally appreciate that you're comparing me to Frank Sinatra. [laughs] But I would say my biggest influence, if we're gonna go there, would have to be Jack Black. Best timing in comedy today. His timing is *stellar*. I don't think anyone makes me laugh more than that guy. He's just incredible. So you want to be a good drummer? Watch Jack Black.

To hear some of Brad Wilk's tracks, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.

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Jazz great John Riley sits down with his former mentor, drumming legend Joe Morello, to discuss music, technique, history, and Joe's latest offering, *Master Studies II*.

Joe Morello

Revisiting a master

text by John Riley
photos by Andrew Lepley

In the 1950s and '60s, jazz groups had plenty of work. Most would do location gigs of two to nine weeks in a club before they would move to the next club in another city. This meant that work, and visibility, were plentiful for drummers.

Legends were made or extended in the era: Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Louie Bellson, Roy Haynes, Shelly Manne, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, and Jack DeJohnette, among many others, were playing great music all over the place.

Jazz songs were climbing up the pop charts, and musicians were personalities. Music magazines around the world chronicled the comings and goings of the bands, and they published annual popularity polls of musicians just like *Entertainment Tonight* does today for movie and music stars.

The Dave Brubeck Quartet was the most popular jazz group of that time. "Take Five," featuring a drum solo by Joe Morello, was a million-seller. This group toured the world playing concerts instead of location club gigs. I can't think of one jazz group today that approaches the level of worldwide recognition that Brubeck's quartet enjoyed in their day. To a great extent, people went especially to hear the virtuosic and musical drumming of Joe Morello. Joe achieved the unprecedented when he won all of the international jazz polls—and repeated the feat several years in a row.

The Brubeck quartet disbanded in 1967, a time when popular music was in a great transition. Since then Joe has kept a lower performance profile but has been a very active teacher, sought out by professionals and beginners alike from around the world. Joe's amazing execution, thorough, proven methods—based on the teachings of George Lawrence Stone, Sanford Moeller, and Billy Gladstone—and engaging personality make him a font of knowledge and a joy to study with.

Today, at age seventy-eight, Joe is still playing great. He's also still growing. His new book, *Master Studies II,* points the way to the drumming innovations of tomorrow.

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Joe, my old teacher, to discuss where it all came from and where his new book is taking it.

John: As a kid, you began playing classical music on the violin. Were you also listening to the popular swing music of the day, or did your interest in jazz and the drums develop after you stopped playing the violin?

Joe: I was always fascinated by the drums, like all kids are. I liked the sound of percussion, especially the timpani. I think if my vision had been better I would have gone to a regular school and become a legitimate snare drummer. I never thought I'd end up playing the drumset.

John: How did you start playing the drums?

Joe: I used to go to the shows held at the Court Square Theater in Springfield, Massachusetts. There'd always be one movie and six great acts—a tap dancer, a singer, a juggler, and a magician sawing people in half! So I used to sit right in the front row next to the pit. The drummer, Joe Sefcik, would be right there in front of me. I could reach over and touch his hi-hats.

It was a real swinging band. They'd open up with a little overture and Joe would play the hats. I used to sit and watch this and think, "Man, that sounds great. I want to do that some day." So I memorized all his brush beats, and I learned the swing beat because that was popular too. I a pair of drumsticks for thirty-five and I'd practice, playing on anyt could—until my father came hon would get mad. That's when I'd hav practice out in the garage.

I kept going to the theater and w the shows, but the acts got bugged b I kept watching the drummer. They "Hey kid, the show's up here, not there."

I told my mother I'd like to stu drums, so she talked to Joe at the She told him she didn't know how because I couldn't see well, but Jo "Let's try it and see how he does."

Joe taught me how to hold the how to read, and the whole thing. W the Bower book and *Stick Control*. I charging $1.50 a lesson and I was wi for two or three years. Then he wen $2 a lesson, and I was crushed. I had Christmas cards to help make a litt money for the lessons.

Little by little, I got better, and ev ly he said, "I don't think I can do more for you. Why don't you go to a teacher?" Around that time I went Buddy Rich play, and I really got i of that power like all the kids did

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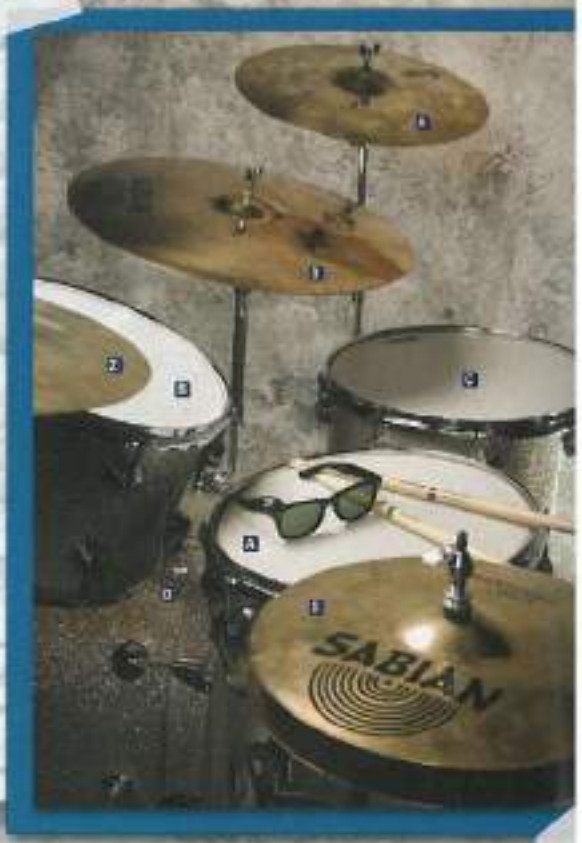
Tuning: Joe tunes his snare drum fairly tight and crisp, with the batter head about a fourth higher than the snare side. All drums are played wide open, with the only muffling being a 2" felt strip on the batter head of the bass drum, running from top to bottom about 3" off the center of the head

Sticks: Pro-Mark Joe Morello signature model. (Joe primarily uses wood-tip sticks, but he occasionally will use nylon tips in playing situations that require a bit more brightness from the ride cymbal.)



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went to see Henry Adler, because people thought he had something to do with Buddy since they wrote that book together. Years later, Buddy told me that he just posed for the photos for that book, Henry wrote it. Anyway, Henry told me, "You don't need me. I think you should go see Burns Moore in New Haven." He was the old rudimental guy. But I didn't go to him. I went to Sanford Moeller, because he taught Krupa. But Moeller didn't want to teach me either. So I went to see George Lawrence Stone, and he said, "Yeah, I'll teach you."

John: Can you give me a synopsis of Mr. Stone's approach to teaching?

Joe: Stone taught that everything should involve natural body movements. You have to learn the way your body works. Everybody else had some cockamamie story that the hands should be up in the air, or the elbows should be in, or the elbows should be out. But Stone said your playing should be natural, as if you brought your hands up from hanging at your side.

Sefcik gave me a good start, but Stone took me a little further. We went through the rudiments and *Stick Control*, the Podemski book, and a book by Simon Sternberg. I remember Joe Raiche and I used to go together to study with Stone. The trouble with Stone's *Stick Control* is that there's not one accent in the book, and it never tells you what to play or how to play it, so people get bored.

When I was studying with Stone, I started to add accents and make variations based on the swinging phrases I heard Krupa play. One time, on the bus to

My Lessons With Joe

BY JOHN RILEY

In the summer of 1971, I attended a weeklong Ludwig Drum Symposium held at the University Of Miami in Florida. This was my first time at an event like this, and it was my first opportunity to spend time around world-class players and serious students. I went to the event to learn, but also to check out Miami, as I was considering applying there.

The faculty included Carmine Appice, Gary Burton, Bobby Christian, Alan Dawson, Roy Haynes, Joe Morello, Fred Wickstrom, and many others. As a jazz novice, I was much more familiar with Carmine Appice's playing than anyone else's. There were daily master classes with each teacher. It was an inspiring week.

Sitting behind me on the plane ride home were a couple of other participants about my age. They had their sticks out and were practicing on the back of my seat. These guys were playing some wicked stuff, so I asked them who they studied with. They—Danny Gottlieb and Bob Muskus—lived a couple of towns away and studied with Joe Morello, who, unbeknownst to me, taught twenty minutes from my house. I had attended Joe's classes at the workshop, but the symposium was a hundred-hour whirlwind in drum heaven, and Joe's classes were kind of a blur in my saturated memory. Danny encouraged me to study with Joe.

I made an appointment for an "evaluation" and arrived early at Dorn & Kirshner Music in Union, New Jersey. I was directed upstairs to a large room full of sheet music, a closed door with "Joe Morello" on it, and a small waiting room—not a typical waiting room, for it contained a metronome, three or four chairs, and very well-worn practice pads. I nervously entered and was eagerly greeted by a couple of guys blistering those pads. They told me I was in the right place; they too were students of Joe's and that he was the greatest.

Finally my time came. Joe invited me into his studio and asked me to sit at the practice pad to his left. The wall directly in front of us was mirrored. Behind us was Joe's drumkit. He had me play a single-stroke roll, a double-stroke roll, paradiddles, and some other rudiments, and read a bit from the Wilcoxon and Cirone books, none of which I had any problems with.

Joe joined in on a couple of the elements. Then he startled me when he used his right hand to push his glasses up his nose while continuing to play as fast with only his left hand as I was with both hands. Finally, he very gently gave me his evaluation: "You've gone as far as you can go with the technique you're using. If you do as I say, practicing three or four hours every day, in three months you'll improve your sound, play more relaxed, and *double* your speed."

I took the first available lesson slot and began the process of relearning how to move the sticks, because that's what Joe prescribed for me. Joe told me, "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." He then demonstrated this concept by playing loud full strokes on his pad, and to my amazement, his sticks actually seemed to rebound up even faster than he threw them down.

My first assignment was to play the first column of page five of the *Stick Control* book very slowly, 8th note equals 60 bpm! I was to start with my sticks pointing towards the ceiling and to forcefully throw them towards the pad. My objective was to develop sensitivity to the rebound of each stick. By starting in the "full" position, and playing loud strokes, the upward momentum of each stick would be most profound. Intellectually this made perfect sense; by allowing the stick to naturally return to its starting point, like a bouncing ball, rather than lifting the stick back up, I would be doing only half the work. Physically it wasn't as easy.

I would play the first line of *Stick Control* over and over, but only one stroke in a hundred would be as lively as Joe's. The power, sound, and ease of that one perfectly executed stroke was so clearly superior that I knew I had to keep at it and improve my percentage. In time my hands began to figure out how to allow the sticks the freedom they needed to more consistently capitalize on their natural momentum. I must say that I did not grip the sticks tightly before meeting Joe; I was using some rebound. But the difference between using some rebound some of the time and allowing the stick to rebound 100% of the time was night and day. Within weeks my sound, endurance, relaxation, and speed improved.

Practicing was no problem, because Joe's method was so clear and my improvement was rapid. Several afternoons a week I would go directly from my high school to the shop, spending hours in the waiting room practicing with his other students. The situation was ideal. I became immersed in Joe's methods. And I guess he saw my dedication and progress because he was very generous, often sneaking me in for a quick five-minute check-up and pep talk between my regular weekly lessons.

Once my full strokes were consistent, Joe introduced the half stroke, and I cultivated the same sense of touch at a moderate volume. The control strokes followed. Next, the forearms were developed through the Moeller stroke. Eventually Joe introduced exercises for the fingers.

I was fortunate to have had ten months of weekly lessons before I left for college. Now, over thirty years later, a day doesn't go by that I'm not reminded of something Joe taught me. He changed my relationship to the drums, and that changed my life.

A day doesn't go by that I'm not reminded of something Joe taught me.

Morello On Film

Joe's educational DVDs are a must-have. In *A Natural Approach To Technique* he clearly explains and beautifully demonstrates each component of technique. In *Around The Drums*, Joe shows how he uses his techniques for the greatest musical expression. In the *Natural Drumming* series, Joe and Danny Gottlieb break the concept down into tiny bits.

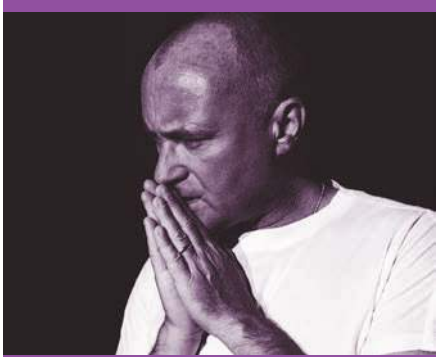
I like seeing Danny demonstrate the ideas side by side with Joe. Their hands are shaped differently, and seeing how it all works for each of them will help others visualize how their own hands can achieve good results.

There are also several great performance DVDs currently in circulation. I like the Dave Brubeck Quartet set from *The Complete Jazz Casual Series*. It's the classic Brubeck quartet filmed in a TV studio in 1961. Joe gets considerable solo space on "Take Five" and really shines on "Castilian Drums."

Legends Of Jazz Drumming includes Joe playing "Take Five" and "Blue Rondo A La Turk" in 1960. My two favorite clips of Joe are his "Sounds Of The Loop" solo from 1963, included on *Natural Drumming Part 1*, and his "Castilian Drums" solo from the *Classic Drum Solos* DVD. I believe "Castilian Drums" was filmed at the Playboy Club in 1961. He begins with his hands and builds to a Buddy Rich-like climax with the sticks.

John Riley

JOE MORELLO
Educator
Joe Morello Autograph Model
American Hickory, TX11A,
Wood- & Nylon-tip



PHIL COLLINS
Solo Artist
Phil Collins Autograph Model
American Hickory, TXPC, Wood-tip

GARY SELIGSON
Broadway
American Hickory, TX5AB, Wood-tip

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John H. Beck PROFESSOR OF PERCUSSION EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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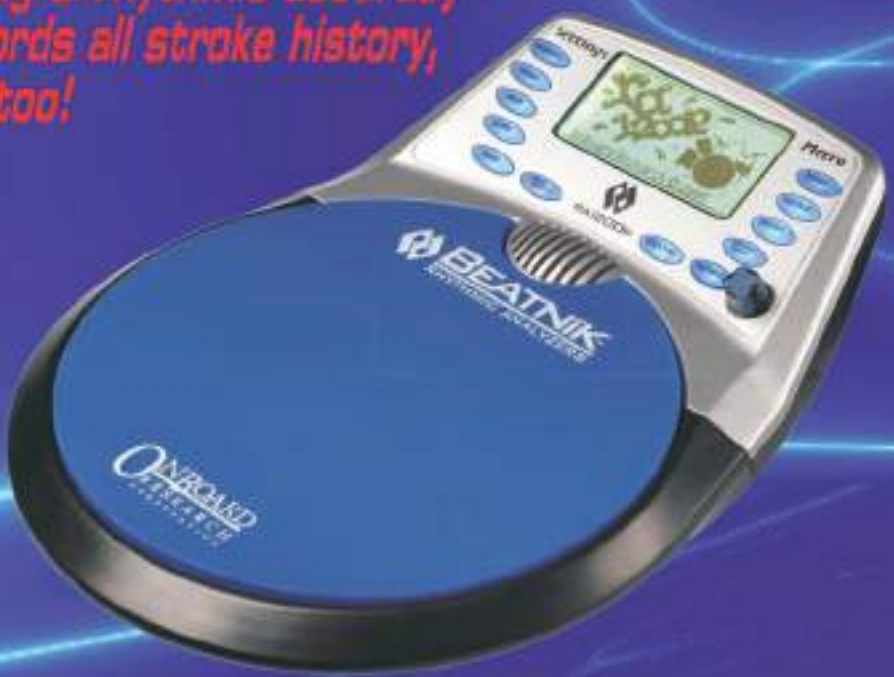

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Boston, I showed Joe Raiche the stuff I was doing, like playing these vamps with accents in one hand and playing with the right hand against it. Joe said, "Oh man, the old man [Stone] is not going to like that." Later, Stone came out with his book, *Accents And Rebounds*, where he's doing all of that stuff. Stone said, "I wrote this because this is the material you like to play."

Stone was a great teacher and the nicest man to work with. If I did something dumb he'd say, "You know…um…did you notice something wrong?" I knew I'd done something wrong, but he had a great way of teaching. It was worth the three-hour bus trip down to Boston.

Everything was a natural approach with Stone, and he also introduced me to the level system. [See sidebar on page 77.] Henry Adler had this thing where everything was parallel motion or a piston-like action. I think it's a good approach for a young kid, just to get them to hold the sticks and not have their hands moving all over the place. But you've got to move past that.

John: What kind of gigs did Stone do?

Joe: Not jazz. He had offers to go with Sousa, but his father was very ill, so he stayed home to help him run the Stone Drum Company. That's when he also started teaching. Strangely enough, he played the violin as a kid, like I did. So did Billy Gladstone. I guess if you're a failure on the violin, you have hope on the drums. [laughs] But Stone didn't want to do anything steady. He subbed on mallets with the Boston Symphony because it was right there.

You know, because of my poor vision, I didn't think that I ever could do anything with drumming. I couldn't drive or get around that easily, so I used to stay home and practice a lot. I couldn't go out and play football, baseball, and such, so I'd practice. The more I got into it, and started listening….

I'll never forget this one time, Gene Krupa was playing at the Hartford Theater, and afterwards I came home and said, "Gee, I can do that same thing." So I went and did a single stroke. [sings] You know when you're a kid, "I can do that."

And then I heard Buddy Rich. I thought that it was interesting the way he played "Opus One." He did a thing with his left hand and I thought, "Geez, how does that work?" So I figured that out myself. I thought that was brilliant.

Anyway, I knew Phil Woods and Sal Salvador from Springfield, and they had moved down to New York. They said, "You've got to come down to the Apple, man." So I said, "Fine." I'd been working in hotel bands. I became pretty well-known in Springfield when I was sixteen or seventeen. It came easy to me.

John: As you moved to New York, what was your dream?

Joe: When I started playing professionally, I always liked to play with dynamics, and not do the world's fastest thing. That was intriguing, but I was always into playing more melodically. That's why I was influenced by Max Roach. Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa were raising hell on the drums. But to me, sometimes that's like going to the circus. I wanted to do something else.

John: Do you remember going down to New York to hear Max?

Joe: Yeah. The first time I went to see him, way back, it was at the Downbeat Club on 52nd Street.

John: Had you heard him on record before that?

Joe: Yeah, but I wanted to see him. So we went down there and he was in a back room, off the stage. It was a little stage, in a funky new club on 52nd Street. It was dark and lit with candles. I went up to Max and said, "Mr. Roach, I really enjoyed you." He said, "Well, man, I'm not a drummer, I'm a mechanic. I fix cars." He was being cute, you know, but it made me feel kind of funny. He was playing all kinds of stuff. I liked some of the chorus things that he did in the '40s, because it was so different from the military-sounding stuff of Gene or Buddy.

John: When I listen to your brush playing, I really hear a connection with Papa Jo Jones.

Joe: Yeah. That's a compliment.

John: Are the things you do with your hands inspired by Jo also?

Joe: No. That started when I heard tabla. The Brubeck Quartet was in India for three weeks once. It was a State Department tour. These tabla players just started off, and rhythmically it was like wheels within wheels—it just kept going and going. Everybody in the room would go, boom, on the 1, and they'd sing the whole thing.

continued on page 77

BUN E. CARLOS
Cheap Trick
American Hickory,
Custom Model, Wood-tip

MARK O'CONNELL
Taking Back Sunday
American Hickory, TXR2B "Natural",
Wood-tip

GENE HOGLAN
Strapping Young Lad
American Hickory, TX2B, Wood-tip

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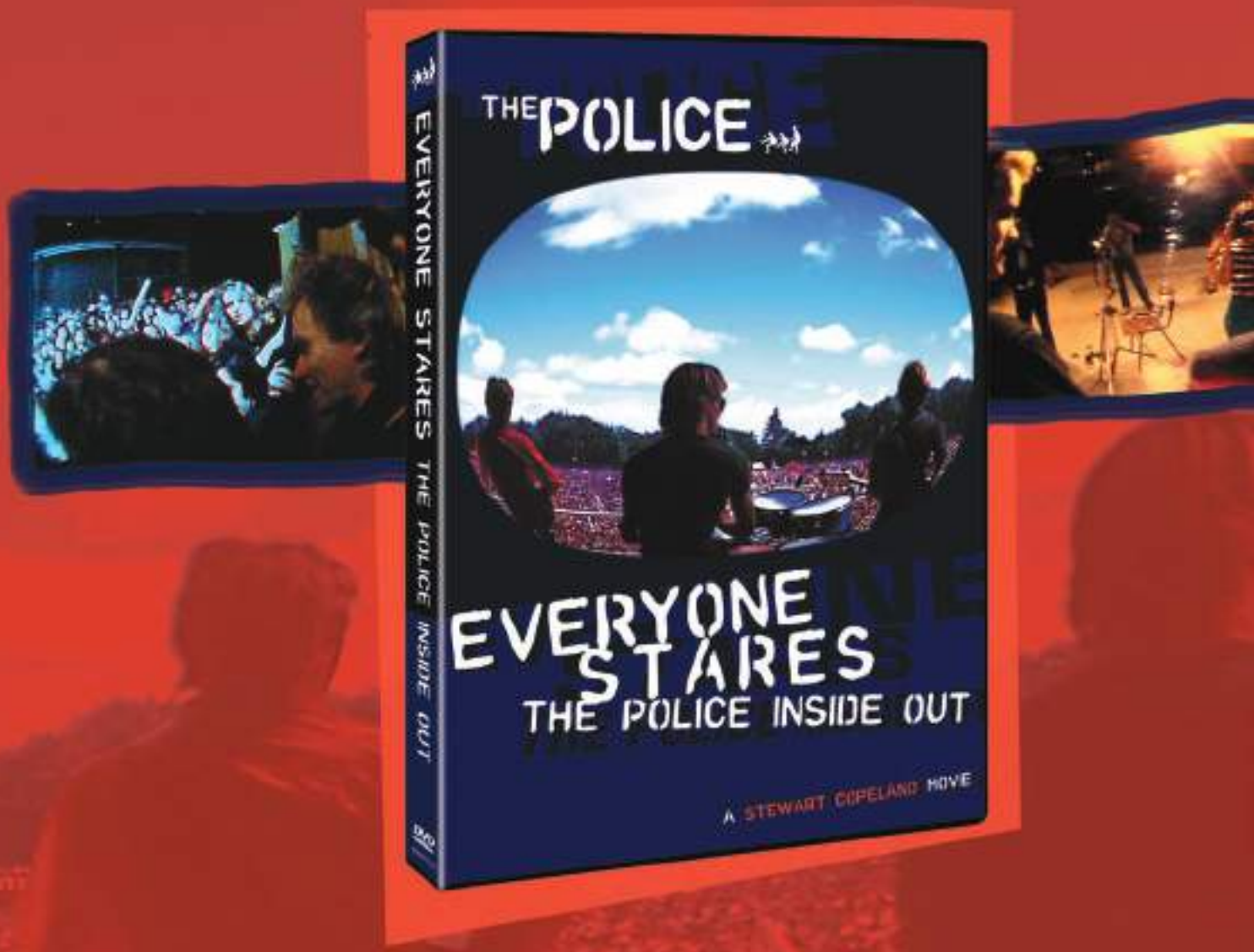
THE POLICE



EVERYONE STARES
THE POLICE INSIDE OUT

In 1978, when I was a member of a struggling rock band called The Police, I scraped together enough money to buy a super8 movie camera. As soon as I raised it to my eye and started filming, amazing things began to happen. It was like watching a movie unfold as the band sparked a fire that lit up the world for us. EVERYONE STARES is that movie. - Stewart Copeland

EVERYONE STARES is a first-person account from Stewart Copeland's eyes of The Police's ascent from obscurity to worldwide fame. Culled from over 50 hours of Super 8 movies he shot during the acclaimed trio's heyday, the film offers an insider's perspective on touring, his band members and the adoring fans that puts the audience in the drummer's seat.

Copeland scores this remarkable movie using seven previously unreleased derangements of classic Police studio & live tracks, along with many original studio & live tracks. This DVD also includes over 20 minutes of bonus footage not seen in previous versions of the movie and a bonus commentary by Andy Summers and Stewart Copeland.

* Over 20 minutes of bonus footage only on this DVD.
* DVD featured in Anamorphic Widescreen with 5.1 Surround DTS & Dolby plus PCM (uncompressed) Stereo.
* Seven previously unreleased derangements of classic Police studio & live tracks scored throughout the film.

A STEWART COPELAND MOVIE

UNIVERSAL MUSIC ENTERPRISES HIP-O/A&M RECORDS PRESENTS A STEWART COPELAND MOVIE
EVERYONE STARES: THE POLICE INSIDE OUT
STARRING STING ANDY SUMMERS KIM TURNER WITH DANNY QUATROCHI JEFF SEITZ TAM FAIRGRIEVE AND IAN COPELAND MILES COPELAND
MUSIC BY THE POLICE EDITED BY MIKE CAHILL MUSIC MIXED BY JEFF SEITZ POST PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR ABBY GAIL PALANKER
CO-PRODUCER BRIT MARLING ASSOCIATE PRODUCER STEVO GLENDINNING EXECUTIVE PRODUCER STEWART COPELAND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER DEREK POWER
WRITTEN, PRODUCED, DIRECTED, PHOTOGRAPHED, EDITED AND NARRATED BY STEWART COPELAND

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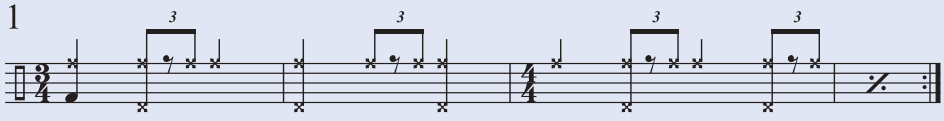
Joe Morello
Style & Analysis
BY JOHN RILEY

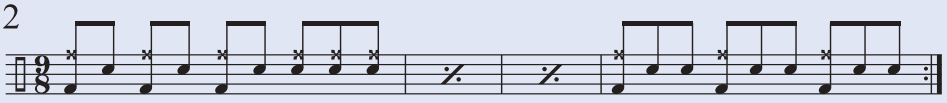
Time Playing

While the Brubeck quartet explored playing jazz in odd time signatures and in mixed meters more vigorously than others at the time, much of their repertoire was in 4/4. On those tunes Joe played tasteful, understated, swinging time with bebop overtones. The melodies and harmonies of the odd-time songs were designed to spell out that "oddness," and Dave Brubeck insistently comped the odd groupings. Whenever appropriate, Joe played in ways that smoothed out the unevenness of those odd grooves.

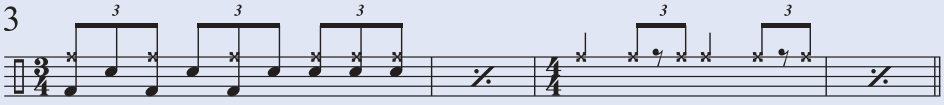
For example, "Three To Get Ready" moves back and forth between two measure of 3/4 and two measures of 4/4. Joe blends the two measures of 3/4 into the two measures of 4/4 by playing his hi-hat on every other beat, like this:

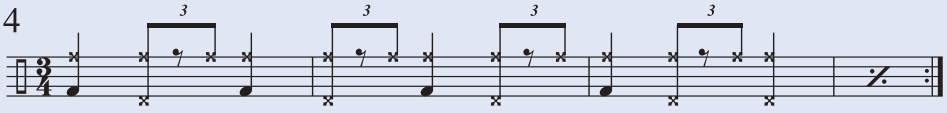
1

On "Blue Rondo A La Turk," the groove is based on 2+2+2+3 = 9/8:

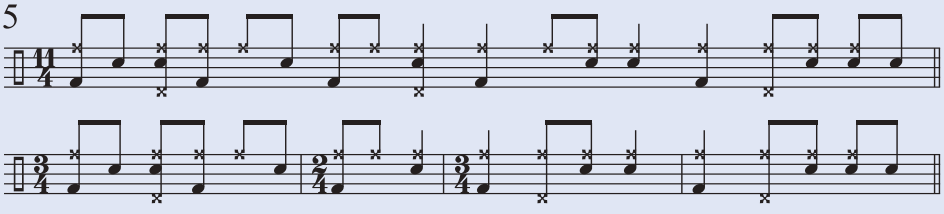
2

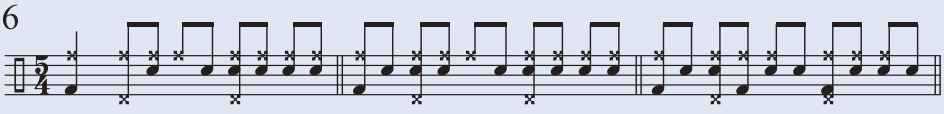


"Blue Rondo"'s main solo section is in 4/4. The transition from 9/8 to 4/4 is most easily understood if the 9/8 is thought of as triplets in 3/4:

3

"It's A Raggy Waltz" is in 3/4, but phrased 2-2-2-3-3 and played like this:

4

"Eleven Four" is phrased 3-2-3-3 and more easily understood when broken into four separate measures.

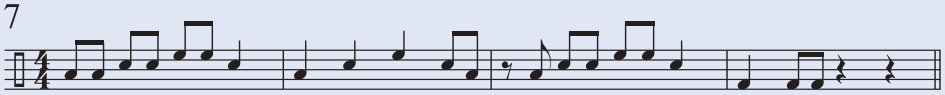
5

On the 5/4 selections like "Take Five," "Countdown," "Far More Drums," and "Castilian Drums," Joe plays variations like these:

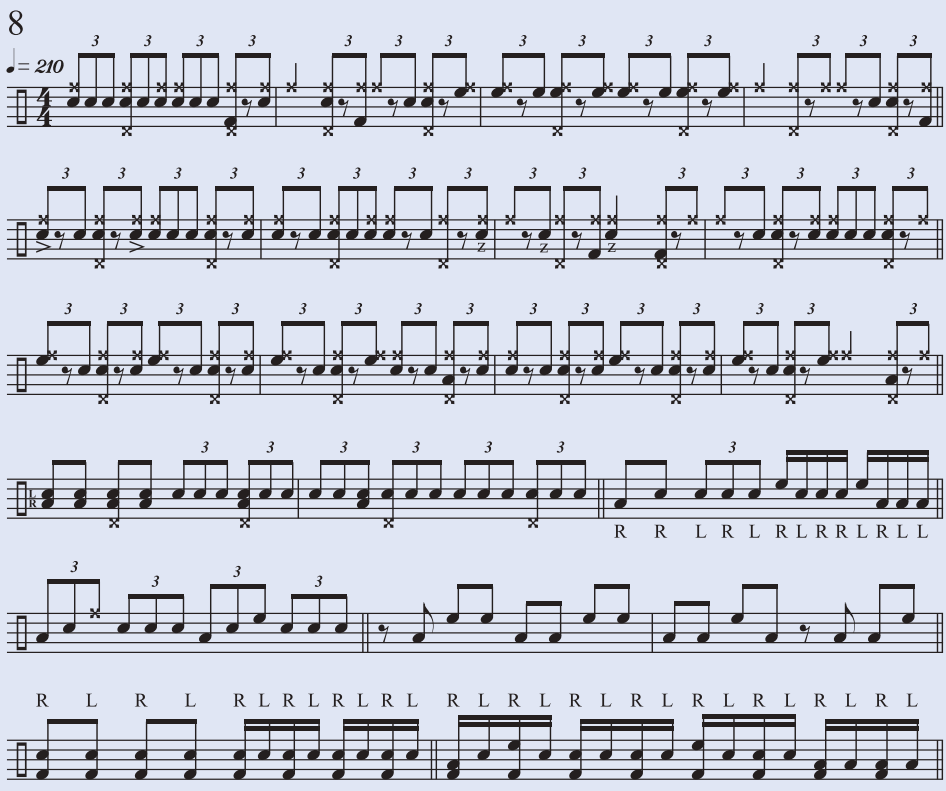
6

More of Joe's time-playing concepts are explored in his book *New Directions In Rhythm*.

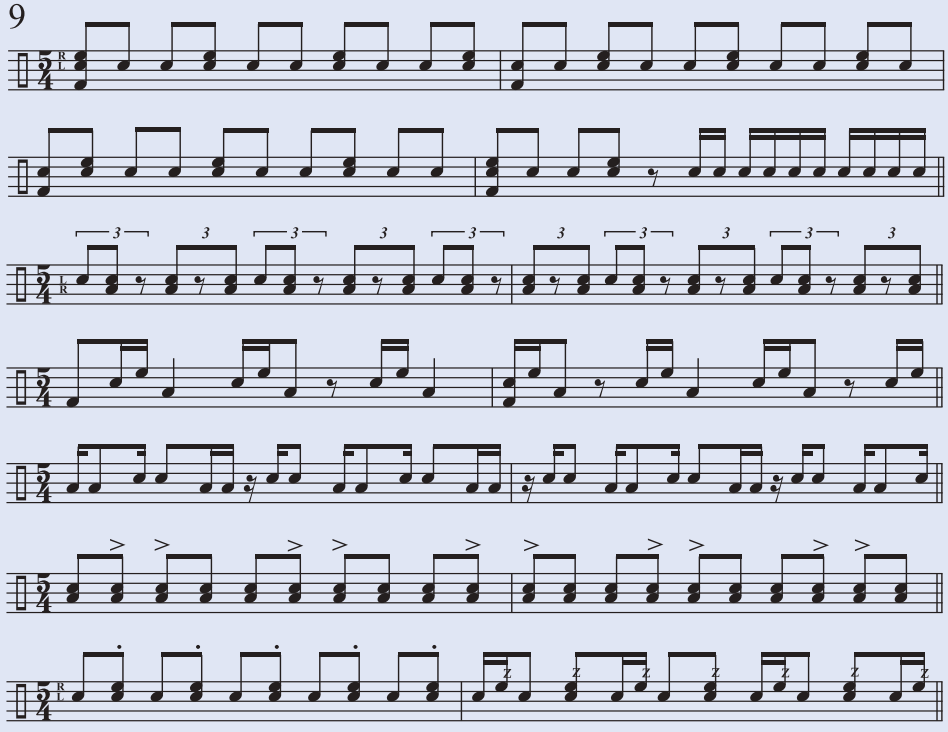
Solo Vocabulary

While we all know Joe has fantastic chops and a great sense of humor, it's his sense of melodic development, use of dynamics, variations in touch, and pacing that give his solos a musical maturity.

Joe can take the simplest motif, like the nursery rhyme "Shortnin' Bread" on *Gone With The Wind*, and create an amazing tapestry. (See Example 7.)

7

"Sounds Of The Loop," from *Jazz Impressions Of The USA*, features Joe's first major recorded solo. On it he displays his phenomenal left-hand technique, melodic inventiveness, and fast right foot.

8

Joe likes to blur the barlines when soloing in 5/4:

9

If you'd like to further explore Joe's drum solo work, the book *Off The Record* includes complete transcriptions of several of his great solos. *Rudimental Jazz* shows Joe's suggestions for developing solo ideas based on the rudiments.

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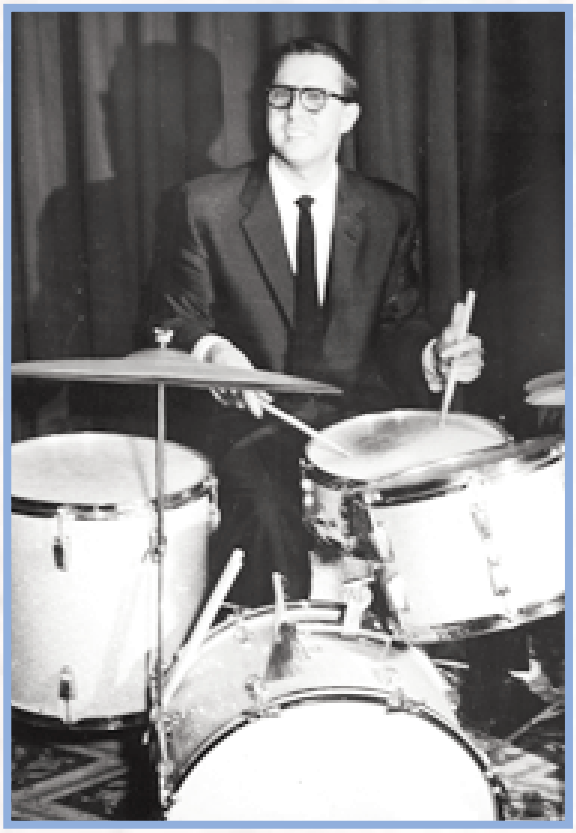
Morello Through The Years

Excerpted From Joe's New Book, *Master Studies II*



A young Joe, from his early days in New York in the 1950s.

Morello with The Dave Brubeck Quartet, one of the most successful jazz groups of all time.

Joe was one of the most in-demand clinicians of the 1960s and '70s, averaging thirty clinics a year all around the world.

Joe has traveled the world, both as a performer and clinician. This press shot was taken in Ceylon (current day Sri Lanka).

The masters meet: Joe with friends Billy Cobham and Buddy Rich.

continued from page 71

John: Did you play with them?
Joe: Yeah. So I'd just go [plays with his hands on the snare drum with the snares off]. Just little things like that. So I started doing that in some of my drum solos just to break it up. [Check out "Castilian Drums" on *Live At Carnegie Hall*.]
John: Tell me about your new book, *Master Studies II*.
Joe: Do you have a copy? I can't see.
John: I have a copy of it here.
Joe: Play something from it for me.
John: There's a phrase like this [plays page 9].
Joe: What are you playing, singles?
John: Yes, that's what's written. Is there a connection with this section and *Stick Control*?
Joe: Yeah, there is.
John: And the connection looks to me like in place of the rights in *Stick Control* you're playing 8th notes.
Joe: Right.
John: And for the lefts you're playing 16th-note triplets.
Joe: I'll tell you, if it's *Stick Control* or whatever control, it's the idea of being able to play. I want students to be able to put the accents where they feel it. Give it a melodic intent.
John: If someone looks at this section and doesn't see the connection, for example, with *Stick Control*, then they're missing out on part of the creative process that you're using that helped you arrive at this. This book is your interpretation and your modifications based on sixty years of playing and teaching. There are many other facets and many other possibilities that you *could* have included, but that you've weeded out because these are the more valuable ones.

One of the many benefits I got out of lessons with you was seeing how you adapted flat material to meet many different kinds of needs. So if another student can make that connection here, then maybe

The Level System

As Described In Joe Morello's DVD, A Natural Approach To Drumming

Stone introduced Joe to the three stages of development:
Wrist turns: the motor.
Forearms: for power.
Fingers–very subtle–the "fine polish."

And the level system:

Full Stroke: 18" Off The Drum

The stick starts in an upright position with the tips towards the ceiling. Snap, or throw, the stick using the wrist towards the drum. Allow the stick to rebound back up to its starting position. Work slowly and keep your arms loose. The movement has three benefits:

1) It loosens all the muscles of the wrist and forearm.

2) It develops a reflex action because, if allowed, the stick will rebound faster than you can pick it up.

3) It develops a good sound because the rebounding stick gets off the drumhead and allows the drum to sing.

The Half Stroke: 6" Off The Drum

This is used for a softer volume. Don't squeeze the sticks by closing the fingers; allow the stick to breathe. Try to hear the resonance of the stick in each stroke.

Control Strokes

Control strokes are used to produce flowing movements when accenting.

The down stroke is used to transition from loud or accented strokes to soft or unaccented strokes. Stop the natural rebound of the stroke by simply closing the fingers around the stick immediately after the stick strikes the drum.

The up stroke is used to transition from soft to loud. Strike the drum, accept the rebound, and assist the stick up to the height needed for its next note.

For more power incorporate the forearms:
1) In a whipping motion for single accents (Moeller).
2) In the straight forearm throw. Add the weight of the forearm to generate multiple accents.

Maintain good form, practice slowly, and strive for accuracy. Don't focus on speed. Speed results from slow, accurate practice.

Finger Control

Everybody who has good technique uses their wrists, forearms, and fingers. Isolate the fingers using a French-style timpani stroke with the thumb up and pulling in with the fingers. The fingers can't achieve as loud a note as the wrist can, because the muscles are smaller.

•

they can solve some of their own problems by using this material.

I see there are a number of exercises in the book that go between singles and doubles or singles and a buzz or doubles and a buzz. Tell me about the three pressures in the grip. You know "pressure" is a dangerous word?

Joe: Yes, it is. But this is something that I think is important, and I've never seen it covered in another book anywhere. Basically, when playing single strokes, you're just throwing the stick down and utilizing the rebound. When you do a double stroke, fingers come into play because you're throwing the stick down and then you're getting one rebound by adding a slight pressure on the stick.

John: When you play a double stroke, is the pressure added at the fulcrum or is it the back three fingers that firm up a little bit that creates the pressure?

Joe: It's the same business: The fulcrum or balance point. Everybody thought it was the first finger and the thumb. There are so many techniques that squeeze very hard at that point. Through the years I found that it was sort of held there, but the action was at the second finger. A lot of people will come up and say, "Gee, I never thought of that." So throw the stick down for the rebound, that's where the second or all your fingers come into play to do the double stroke. It's two for one. Just by throwing the stick down you're getting two.

Now, for a closed roll, which is multiple rebounds, you have to close the fingers a little more. But too much pressure and you get a brrr.

John: A short buzz.

Joe: On the other hand, use too little pressure and you're going to get an open, sloppy buzz. So this is where you have to feel and have sensitivity in your touch. It's easier to demonstrate than it is to verbalize.

John: Later in the book things get quite difficult. The Revisited Table Of Time gets really hairy when you get into the odd groups.

Joe: Like the sevens?

John: Particularly the sevens, but also the fives—five into six, that kind of stuff.

Joe: Here, the five into six [plays].

John: So you play the five-stroke roll sticking at the triplet rate?

Joe: Yeah, I would do that. I think it's easier for the student to pick it up that way.

You know, I was asked about doing a CD with this book, but to try going through this whole thing on a practice pad, well, it's not musical. It is in the respect that it will help you to develop what you want to do.

John: It's a conditioning book, and you take that conditioning to the instrument. So when you "hear" something, you have the resources to play it.

Joe: That's basically what it is. You're not going to take this stuff out on a gig. It's not a coordination book, like your books. That's why I listen to your records.

John: What do you think Stone would say about this book?

Joe: Stone, I think, would like it. He'd probably say, "I haven't seen anything like this." No matter how you work on this book, you can get something out of it for the development of your hands. I've written all of the exercises out because many students will only play what's written, not what's referred to as variations.

John: People need to see other perspectives and to be challenged. What they do with it is their business. There are always

people who can play fast, but they have no sense of form, groove, or melody. And the fact that this book is out there, it's not going to help or hurt them. But to the more sophisticated student of music, this book will be an asset.

Joe: That's about it, yeah.

John: [plays something on the pad]

Joe: Your hands sound good, John. You must have studied with someone. [laughs]

John: Well, I've been working at it.

Joe: You're using a lot of Gladstone's things, the way your hands hit the drum. That's the important thing, how you get a sound out of the drum. Clamping down on the stick is no good; that kills the sound.

John: Since you mentioned Gladstone, tell me about your lessons with him. What did you hope to get from him?

Joe: Gladstone had the fastest hands and best sound I've ever heard. People used to go to Radio City just to watch Billy play the show; they ignored the Rockettes! He was the original cast drummer for *My Fair Lady*. When that show came to town, I went down to the theater and Billy snuck me into the pit right next to him. I saw him tuning the timpani and realized the guy had perfect pitch. I watched him play for three nights. After the show we would come back to my apartment, and that's when I got to study with him.

I had a month off from the Brubeck band at that particular time. At first we were working three or four months steady, with a day or two off here and there. But by then the group was starting to do better and we needed some "R&R," so we'd work three months and take a month off.

So Gladstone and I would hang out every night, and I'd start playing and intentionally play everything all wrong, you know, and he'd say, "No, no, that's not it." Finally, he said to me, "I guess you really want me to teach you." He didn't want to teach me. I kept saying I wanted to learn from him, but he said, "You don't need it. You do all this stuff." Anyway, we'd get together and work on things. He was very soft-spoken. You would never think he was a drummer.

John: I heard a story about when you went to see Gladstone for the first time in his drum studio. He had a snare drum with a practice pad on it and a pair of sticks suspended from the ceiling with fishing line.

Joe: He told me that he did that, but I never saw it. He did have a thing, like a small gallows, and he had some practice pads there and he tied the strings at the balance point of the stick. He played double strokes with just his fingers on it to show the importance of the balance point and the rebound stroke. But it wasn't suspended from the ceiling.

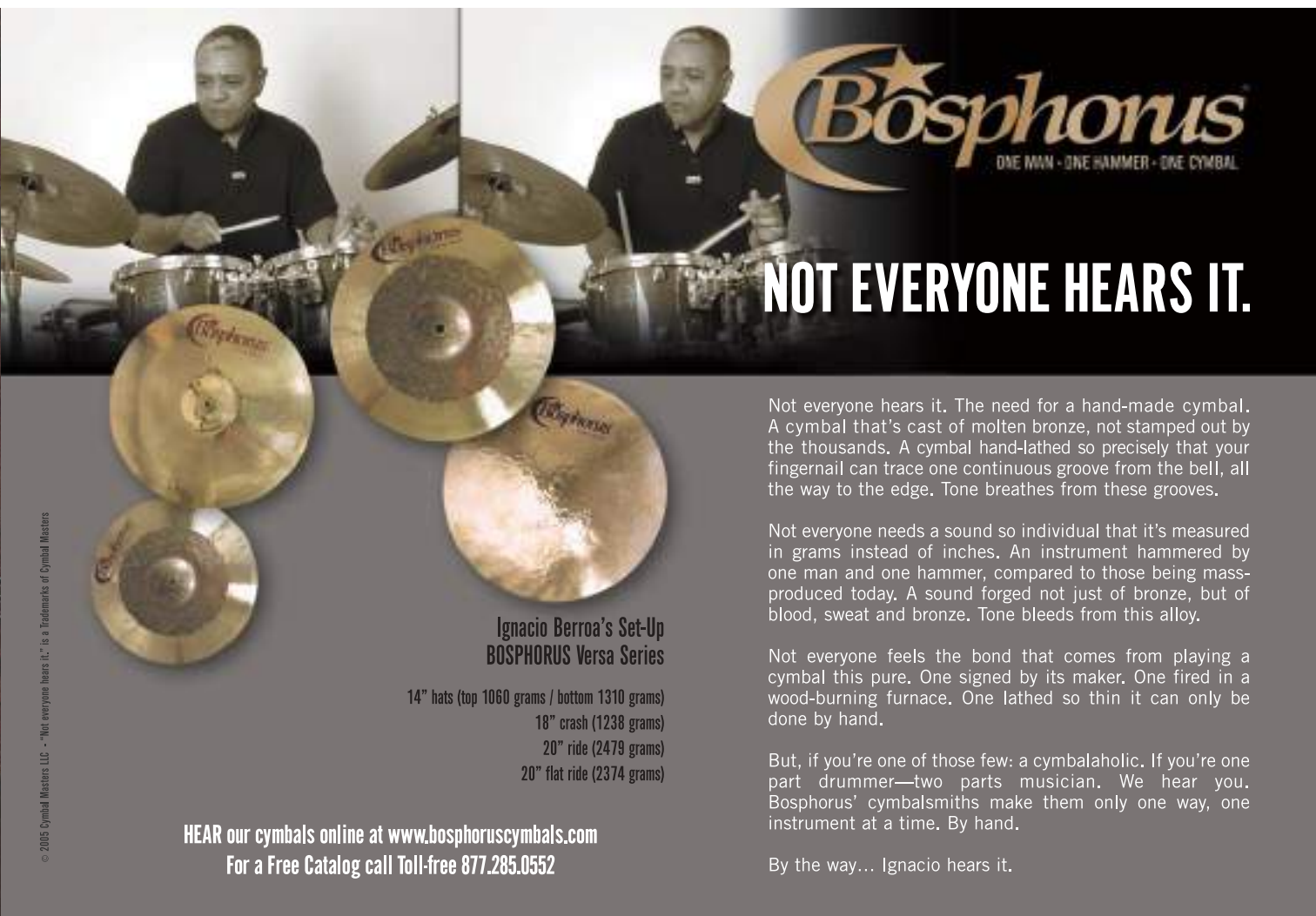
John: Were your lessons with him on a pad or on the snare drum?

Joe: He could do it both ways, but he had that pad that he invented. The lessons at his house were on the pad and on the drum he made.

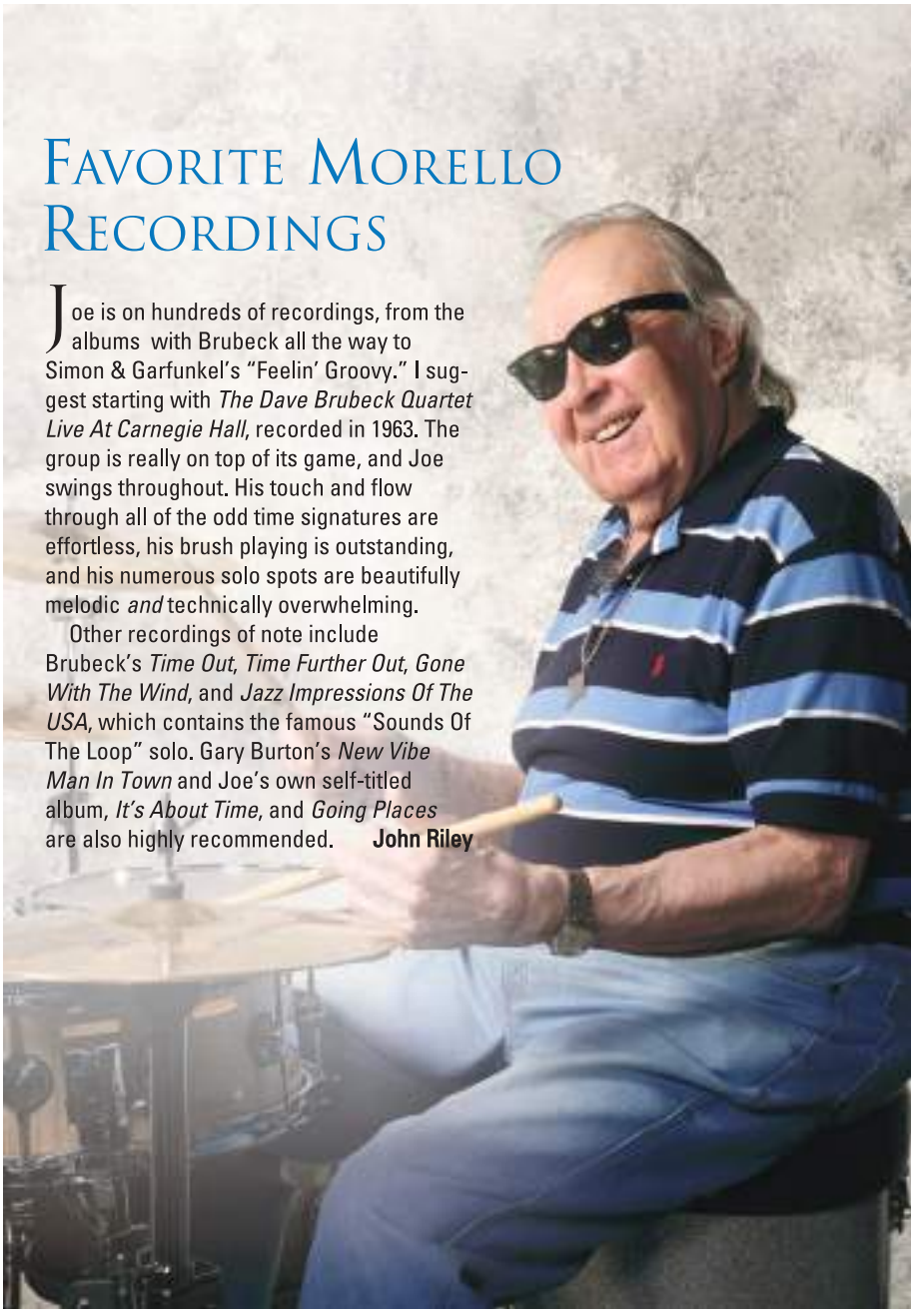
John: How did his lessons add to the level system you got from Stone?

Joe: It just reinforced it, really, because you could do it with the fingers, wrists, and forearms. He knew about that because he played at various levels, but not flailing over his head, like most of us have seen in that famous picture of him. That was just a pose for the picture. He played off the drum—that was his whole thing.

If you're playing an accented triplet, you would play with a down motion and an up motion. It's about preparation. If somebody



Favorite Morello Recordings



Joe is on hundreds of recordings, from the albums with Brubeck all the way to Simon & Garfunkel's "Feelin' Groovy." I suggest starting with *The Dave Brubeck Quartet Live At Carnegie Hall*, recorded in 1963. The group is really on top of its game, and Joe swings throughout. His touch and flow through all of the odd time signatures are effortless, his brush playing is outstanding, and his numerous solo spots are beautifully melodic *and* technically overwhelming.

Other recordings of note include Brubeck's *Time Out, Time Further Out, Gone With The Wind*, and *Jazz Impressions Of The USA*, which contains the famous "Sounds Of The Loop" solo. Gary Burton's *New Vibe Man In Town* and Joe's own self-titled album, *It's About Time*, and *Going Places* are also highly recommended. **John Riley**

is playing a paradiddle with all down strokes, RLRR, when you get to a certain speed how the hell do you do it? That's playing with no preparation. That was one of Stone's things and I sort of went into it even more.

You know, if you've got an accent, your stick's not going to be on the drum, you're going to be up, prepared for the accent.

John: Right. So you play the paradiddle down, up, tap, tap, down, up, tap, tap?

Joe: Yeah. But try it the other way just by saying down, down, down, down…you know what I'm saying? There's no form there.

John: Right. You can't get any speed that way.

Joe: I've always said Sefcik really taught me a lot, at first. He gave me all the basics, including a little Moeller. Stone brought me to a different level with the dynamics and so on. And then Billy just put it all together with the rebound stroke and things like that.

John: Thanks for sharing your recollections and drumming insights.

Joe: My pleasure. You know what you said earlier about how you're still working at it? I've always felt it was important to keep improving. Don't reach a certain point and say, "Well, I can do all this, and that's it." You should always want to do more and more.

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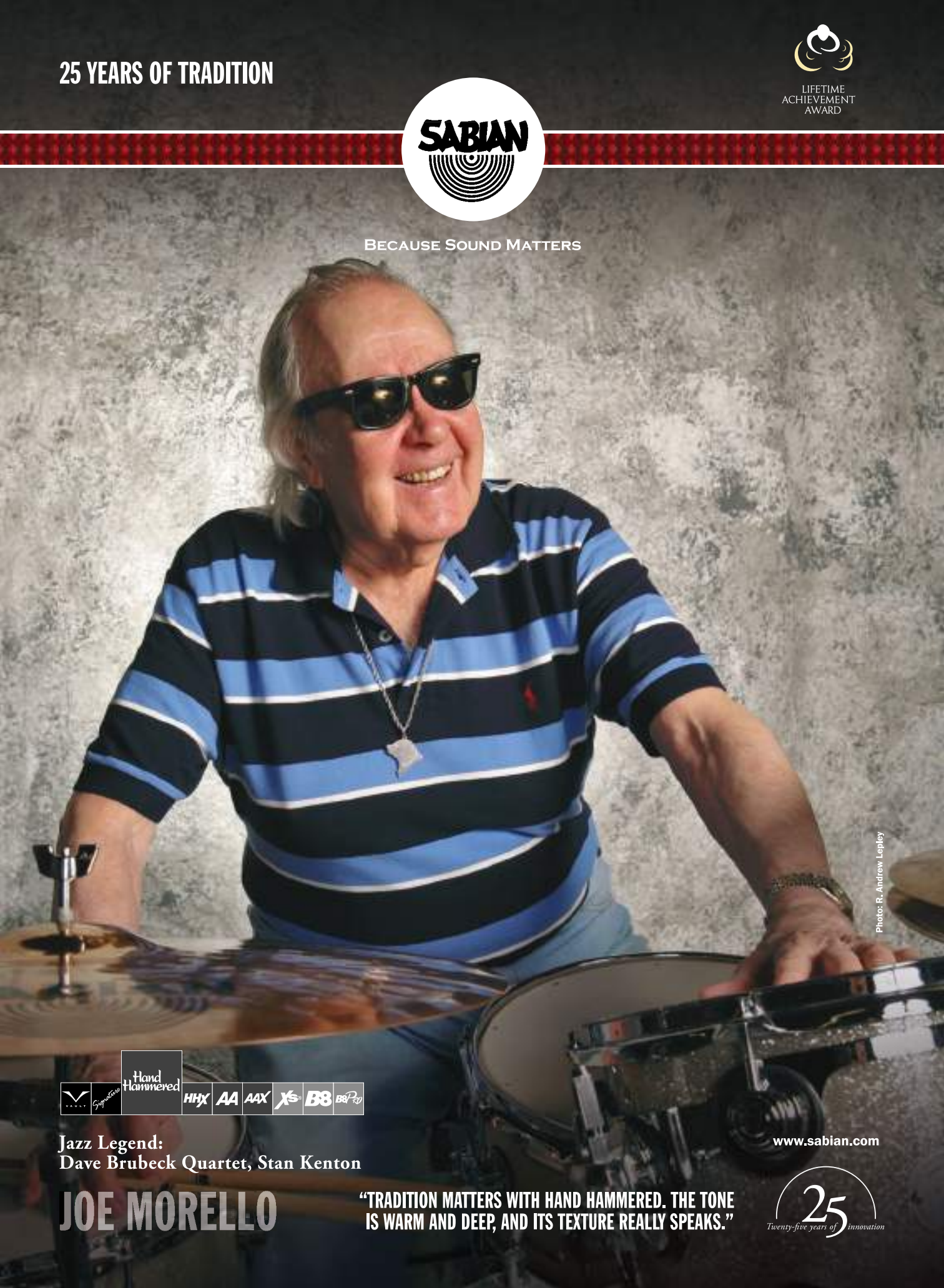

Photo: R. Andrew Lepley

Jazz Legend:
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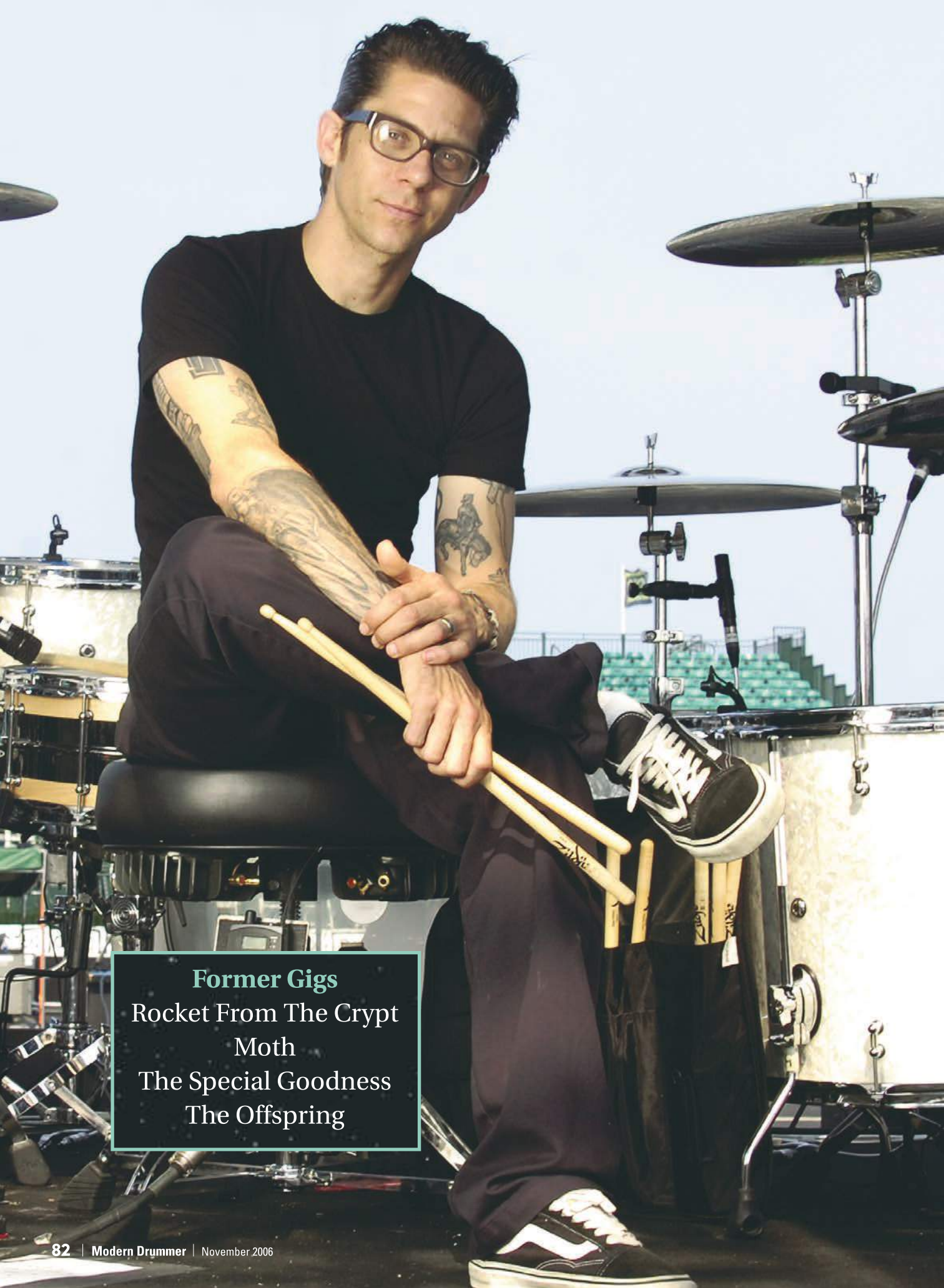

Former Gigs
Rocket From The Crypt
Moth
The Special Goodness
The Offspring

ANGELS & AIRWAVES' ATOM WILLARD

While slammin', bashing, and brutalizing a drumkit may be Atom Willard's forte, his work in hot new group A&A is revealing a maturity and hipness in his playing not heard before.

For roughly a decade, drummer Atom Willard's performance was almost solely defined by his participation on the stages and in the studio with legendary San Diego–based rock tour de force Rocket From The Crypt. His full-fisted, uninhibited pummeling of large, floppy crash cymbals, perched on stands often devoid of felts and wing nuts, and his inclination towards utilizing—and consequently abusing—massive toms were all a part of Willard's trademark modus operandi. Within just a few years, the buzz building around Willard had him joining the ranks of literal heavy hitters like John Bonham, Dave Grohl, and Dale Crover.

Willard launched his music career by joining RFTC in 1991, just after the release of the band's full-length debut, *Paint As Fragrance*. Throughout his tenure in Rocket, Willard ushered in weighty, tribal tom patterns, full-blast quarter-note snare hammers, and the entertaining visuals of flying sticks to match the roaring sounds RFTC presented. The full-lengths on which he performed—*Circa: Now!*, *Scream, Dracula, Scream!*, and *RFTC*—in addition to numerous singles and EPs, were each crammed with Willard's wonderful drumming insight in their own respective ways.

story by Waleed Rashidi • photos by Gene Ambo

But Willard departed Rocket From The Crypt after the release of 1998's *RFTC*, instead opting to perform in several other projects including Moth, The Special Goodness (with Weezer drummer Pat Wilson on guitar and vocals), and The Offspring.

The latest of Willard's endeavors is Angels & Airwaves, a new band created and fronted by Blink-182 guitarist/vocalist Tom DeLonge. A seemingly different gig for the all-guns-blazing Willard, Angels & Airwaves finds the stick master infusing a dose of dynamics into his usual full-throttle repertoire, concentrating more on feel and groove rather than the bash, smash, and flash of his earlier works. "Joe Barresi once gave me one of the best pieces of advice," says Willard of the engineer/producer, who he worked with on a Special Goodness recording session. "He said, 'The only fill you've got to be worried about is [AC/DC drummer] Phil Rudd.'"

While most of the Angels & Airwaves album was recorded at DeLonge's house (and produced by DeLonge) in San Diego, Willard's drums were tracked at the Foo Fighters' studio in Northridge, California. The resulting sessions produced the band's debut, *We Don t Need To Whisper*, released earlier this year on Geffen.

Willard's ability to become an in-demand drummer has reaped many benefits, including allowing him to live out his dream to perform as a full-time musician. "I feel so fortunate," he says. "There are so many amazing drummers, so skilled and technically amazing. I feel so lucky to be in the position that I'm in and to be able to make a living. I got lucky." Yes, Willard has been lucky, but he's also a damn good player.

WILLARD'S KIT

Drums: Orange County Drum & Percussion in white marine pearl finish

A. 7x12 snare (20-ply)
B. 6½x14 Modern Classic snare (Black Beauty–type, 20-ply wood edges, metal-wood hybrid shell)
C. 6x6 timbalito
D. 9x12 tom (on snare stand)
E. 14x16 floor tom
F. 16x18 floor tom
G. 18x26 kick

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 18" ZHT EFX (or Crash Of Doom)
2. 14" hi-hats (brilliant K top, New Beat bottom)
3. 20" A Projection crash
4. 22" A Custom ride
5. 21" K Brilliant Sweet ride (used as crash)
6. 22" K Jazz ride (used as crash)

Hardware: DW, including 5000 series hi-hat and bass drum pedals (hi-hat pedal loose and open with slight "slag," tight bass drum pedal spring tension, felt beater), no top felts or sleeves on cymbal stands

Heads: Remo Emperor X on main snare batter, coated Emperors on all toms and 12" snare, clear Ambassadors on tom bottoms (small pieces of Moon Gel on top heads for muffling), PowerStroke 3 on kick drum batter with smooth white Ambassador on front (small pillow and one large folded towel inside)

Sticks: Zildjian Super 5B model (hickory with wood tip)

Electronics: Hart Dynamics Hammer triggers (stick actuated, two), Foot Hammer triggers (pedal actuated, two), Macintosh Powerbook G4 laptop (two, A&B rig)

Microphones: Audix

MD: How did you connect with Tom DeLonge?

Atom: I've known Tom forever, just being in San Diego. We grew up with a lot of the same stuff, even though he's a couple of years younger than me. But I guess he'd come out and see Rocket play and was always really cool, into it, and a fan of the band. Blink-182 did a Warped Tour many years ago, and it was the same one that Rocket did, so we kind of hung out a little bit on that tour.

Tom and I always had like-minded views on music, and we were both really into a couple of different bands, so we'd chitchat. Then recently, friends called to say, "You know, Tom's got this new band happening. You should see what's up with it." And the same thing happened with him: "Dude, you should call Atom about this." So it all worked out.

MD: After you left Rocket From The Crypt, you went to Moth for a short period of time. What was that about?

Atom: Yeah, I was getting a lot of requests to do records and stuff, people saying, Come play for this tour or whatever. But with Moth, singer Brad Stenz's songwriting really got to me. I really liked his songs. I think he's an amazing lyricist and he's got some really cool stuff. Actually, Josh Freese did the record and they were looking for someone to do the tour, and I was like, "Yeah, I love this stuff."

MD: And then Josh Freese played on The Offspring's *Splinter* record, and you replaced him again.

Atom: Oh yeah, I've learned Josh's parts so many times, I can't even tell you. I can't say I know what Josh is going to do, but I'm familiar with him. [laughs] He's the man, right?

I joined The Offspring in the latter part of 2003. They had kind of a short list of guys auditioning. I think there were about eight drummers, and then they dropped it down to just a few. I was one of those few, and then they gave me the call.

I came in and just did all the stuff I thought would be fun with their songs. And when they called me back, they said, "You know, just stick to the parts." [laughs] Yeah, "You played that well, but that's not really what we're looking for."

MD: You did the Vans Warped Tour with The Offspring last year. What's it like from a drummer's perspective?

Atom: It was fun, but a little strange. There are so many bands and there's so much energy going on. You wait around all day and see other bands, and then you only play for half an hour—and there's no soundcheck. So there's twenty-three and a half hours in the day that you need to, like, busy yourself. It's kind of a trip. I think I prefer going on more traditional tours where at least you have a soundcheck where you can try things out.

MD: Did you tech for Patrick Wilson from Weezer for a little while?

Atom: Yeah, we started jamming together, doing the band The Special Goodness. After we were getting going with that, Patrick went on tour with Weezer. I told him, "Dude, take me with you. We'll practice after soundcheck, and I'll be your drum tech." Now, I'd never been a drum tech, so I didn't know what to do. That was right when they were about to start doing their *Green* record.

The times Pat and I got to practice became less and less, and they had so much success with that record that it just got too busy to even jam. I was like, "I'm not playing drums that much. What a bummer!" It was a good job, and it paid well, but it was really hard. And this sounds funny, but it was hard to watch someone else playing the drums every night when I wasn't able to. Pat is an incredible drummer. I love his style and his feel. I can't even emulate it, because there's something so laid back about it, but then he pushes through certain sections. He's really got a neat feel.

MD: What are some of the things you learned from being on that side of the fence?

Atom: I learned that I really, *really* wanted to play the drums. It was about a year and a half after I left Rocket, and I was doing different things, making money here and there, and it was a hustle. And then to be in a situation where I was kind of not allowed to play, it really illustrated the fact that it was not my path and that I needed to be playing, no matter what the monetary situation was. As long as I could survive, I needed to play. That was a really good lesson.

There are a couple of guys who are really good drummers, but they also tech, and they're like, "Dude, if you ever need a drum tech…." And I'm like, "I'm not calling you, because you need to be playing. I'm not going to be the one that keeps you from following your dreams."

MD: Your earlier playing with Rocket From The Crypt seemed a bit more experimental and busy. When did you find yourself really getting into your current solid groove?

Atom: I think with the last Rocket record I did, *RFTC*, I really started to get my parts together ahead of time and was really focused on what I wanted to do, getting into the less-is-more theory and putting it into action. I think that was the start of it. And the more I'd listen to busy drummers and the more that busy drumming came into fashion, the less I liked it. I wanted to feel what the song was doing as opposed to doing all this extra stuff.

I know that people say this in *Modern Drummer* all the time, but I really tried to play for the song. It's true. The drums are there to get people moving and feeling what you're doing. Here's this groove, and then here comes the vocals…. Keep the

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Atom Willard

groove going, don't get in the way. Don't step on people's toes when they're trying to get their point across. That was the start of it. With The Special Goodness stuff, I was trying to keep it simple, keep it pretty much *Back In Black*.

MD: You've performed on quite a few recordings now. How does the Angels & Airwaves album compare?

Atom: It's the most exciting thing I've done—for the most part, just because of the way we did it. It was a different approach. We got these drum loops and made sequences on the computer with different sounds. We used all these experimental noises to make rhythms, like dropping toolboxes and rolling lots of rocks across the ground. We'd piece it together to give us this rolling rhythm, and get a feel for a song. Sometimes we'd do simple beats too, with a drum machine, and then we'd write the entire song around that. Or we'd have a guitar riff first, and then we'd finish the song with vocals.

After all of that was done, when we had five or six of those together, we'd go into the studio and put drums on them. In many ways, it was cool to be the last ingredient, because, as drummers, we're so used to being the flour of the cake, not the frosting.

There were a lot of sequences and loops, and a lot of what we put down initially had stayed. It was really cool to come in and know where everything was. I just played the deepest groove I could to try and accentuate the feel of the song.

MD: Any other memorable recording experiences you could share with us?

Atom: When Rocket From The Crypt did *Scream, Dracula, Scream!*, it was the craziest two and a half months I ever experienced. I was maybe twenty-one or twenty-two. We had this huge studio, and somehow there was this unlimited budget and we took all this time to get drum sounds. We tried out all these different drumsets, running two different tape machines—since the drums and bass were going to 16-track, 2". There was so much technology and materials utilized to make our sound come across, it was a crazy thing. We even had string musicians coming in and people arranging parts with us. It was just a world that I didn't think that band would ever get into.

I think we made a great record, but we probably could've made it for about half as much money. I think it was a turning point for the band, too, because everybody who

ATOM ON THE AIRWAVES

Recordings

Artist	Album
Angels & Airwaves	We Don't Need To Whisper
Rocket From The Crypt	Scream, Dracula, Scream!
Rocket From The Crypt	RFTC
Rocket From The Crypt	Hot Charity
The Special Goodness	Land Air Sea
Val Emmich	Slow Down Kid
Melissa Auf Der Maur	Auf Der Maur
Rocket From The Crypt	All Systems Go (1&2)

Faves

Artist	Album	Drummer
Fugazi	all	Brendan Canty
Slint	Spiderland	Britt Walford
Led Zeppelin	all	John Bonham
Elvis Costello	My Aim Is True	Pete Thomas, Steve Goulding
Elvis Costello	This Year's Model	Pete Thomas
Queens Of The Stone Age	Songs For The Deaf	Dave Grohl
The Meters	The Best Of The Meters	Zigaboo Modeliste
The Who	The Best Of The Who	Keith Moon
Weezer	Pinkerton	Pat Wilson
The Clash	all	Topper Headon

considers themselves fans of the band brings up that record.

MD: What did you learn from Tom's production approach on the Angels & Airwaves disc?

Atom: The whole approach on this record was trying every part we could think of. Even if the first idea is the raddest one, let's try others. We would do all these different takes, and even if they were all keepers, we'd try to figure out what the parts would be. Everybody's ideas count, everybody's input matters. Whatever gets the best result, who cares who came up with it?

MD: How long did you spend making the album?

Atom: It took a year.

MD: Did you write all the drum parts?

Atom: I could say that I came up with all the parts, and we'd all vote on which ones we'd use. Or somebody would say, "What if you did that not only in the verse, but in the chorus too?" So having different outlooks helped, because I was like, "Wow, I

would never have thought to do that. That's cool. I could've played it, but I just wouldn't have played it there."

MD: What sorts of challenges did you encounter in making the Angels & Airwaves record?

Atom: There's a song called "The Gift," and in the pre-chorus section, I had a part that came very easily and that I was excited about. That led into a really busy beat for the chorus that I thought would work better. Tom said, "Let's try to chill it out a little bit." It's all tom-oriented, and trying to get the chorus to move the right way using just the toms took some doing. I definitely had to get the feel right. It's my natural instinct to get the cymbals cranking out to get the energy happening.

For the verses, Tom said, "I want to hear a beat to rival U2's 'Sunday, Bloody Sunday.'" And I said, "Well, all right." I had that in my mind, but I didn't want to rip off Larry Mullen Jr., so I came up with something that had a groove to it and the same kind of marching feel, but wasn't a direct copy.

MD: The end of "The War" has some funky hi-hat work on it. That's not something I would've expected from you. How did that come to pass?

Atom: That came from the idea of the band. We were all like, "We're starting down a new road—new band, new ideas, new songs—so let's take a new approach to everything. So that translated a little bit into what I was doing. I was like, You know what? I don't need to always play quarter notes on an open hi-hat. I can if I want, and I did that for a long time. But I was definitely encouraged to try other things.

MD: You constantly and consistently hit so hard. How did you build your playing to the point to where you are now?

Atom: That's kind of a weird "chicken or the egg" type of situation. I don't know if I was playing loud and they [RFTC] started getting bigger amps, or if they were getting bigger and I started to play louder just to hear myself. In the days of Rocket, we had two full stacks on either side and a huge bass rig crammed in a little practice room. Those were the days when we wrote *Scream, Dracula, Scream!* It was six- to eight-hour days, five days a week. We were insane. It's crazy to think about it now. Having that kind of routine or schedule really made me get my stamina up. It was a necessity to be able to hear what I was doing.

I got into big drums, which is funny because they're actually quieter than small drums. I was playing a 28" bass drum, a 16" rack tom, and a 20" floor tom. You think it looks cool and you think it's as loud as it can possibly be, but over time I realized, Wow, this isn't that loud. If you rimshot a 12" rack tom, which is what I have now, it's so loud. It's crazy loud! I'm actually back up to a 26" kick, but the toms and stuff, you've got to have them within reason. A 20" floor tom really doesn't make that much noise.

MD: Yet you seem to always use large cymbals. Is that still a part of your setup?

Atom: Yes, there's nothing like 'em. For crashes, I have a 21" Zildjian Sweet Ride and a 22" jazz ride off my right side, as well as a 20" Projection Crash over my hi-hats.

MD: How do you maintain your stamina up on stage and on tour?

Atom: I exercise. I was really into mountain biking for a long time, and even got into racing mountain bikes for a little bit.

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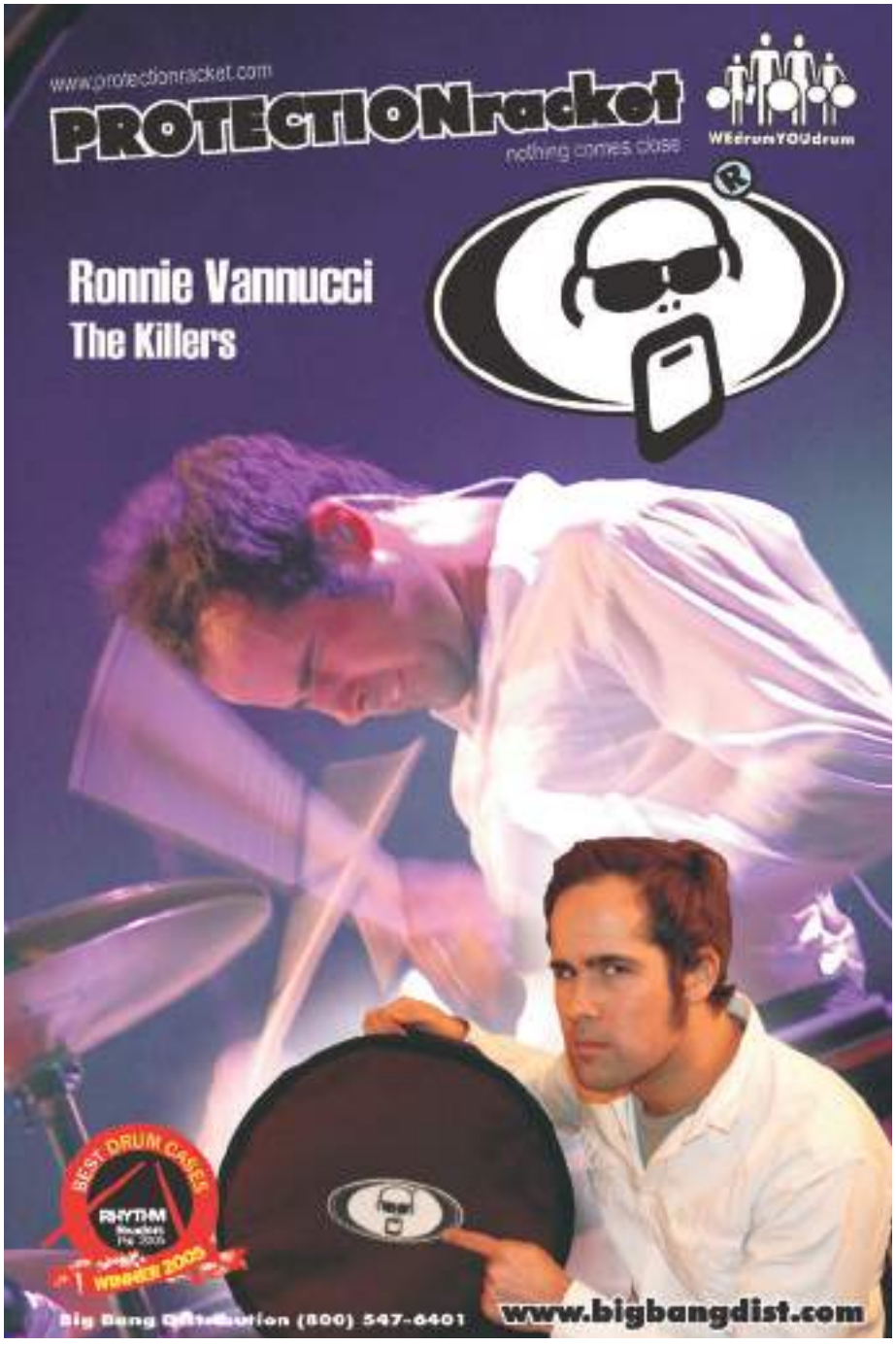

Atom Willard

It's a little dangerous, but I still really enjoy it. But it got to the point where I was such a junkie for mountain biking, going out on these four-hour rides, that to do less than that felt like I really wasn't doing it. So time becomes the real commodity, trying to fit those kinds of rides in when you've got a busy practice schedule and whatever else going on.

I took up running to supplement it, so I do that a lot. You can run for forty-five minutes or an hour and get a really good workout. That's what I do when I'm on tour. I go out, leave the hotel, try to remember where I turned left and right, run out for thirty minutes, and then turn around and come back. It's a great way to see a city.

MD: Do you feel that's improved your drumming in any way?

Atom: I don't know if it's improved it, but I do know that I feel it if I haven't been exercising. Exercise helps get your body in tune with what it needs to do.

MD: What else do you do to get into optimal playing shape?

Atom: I always warm up before I play. If you go out and just try to play [aggressively], you'll get hurt and you won't be able to play like that the next night. Respecting the need for that kind of preparation helps prioritize your pre-show time.

I try to warm up for a good fifteen to twenty minutes. I don't play on a pad, I play on a pillow. And I don't use weighted sticks or anything. But playing on a pillow forces you to lift the sticks back up. It gets your arms full of blood and gets them going. As for what I play while warming up, it's all the old marching band rudiments.

MD: How important do you feel it is to have an identifiable style?

Atom: That's something I've always hoped I could get across on a recording. There are definitely a handful of guys that, when they start playing, you're like, "Oh, that's Stewart Copeland. Oh, that's John Bonham." You can just tell. And if I can get just a hint of that, I feel like I've won the lottery.

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Cheap Trick's Bun E. Carlos

Still Rockin' in Rockford

story by John M. Aldridge • photos by Paul La Raia

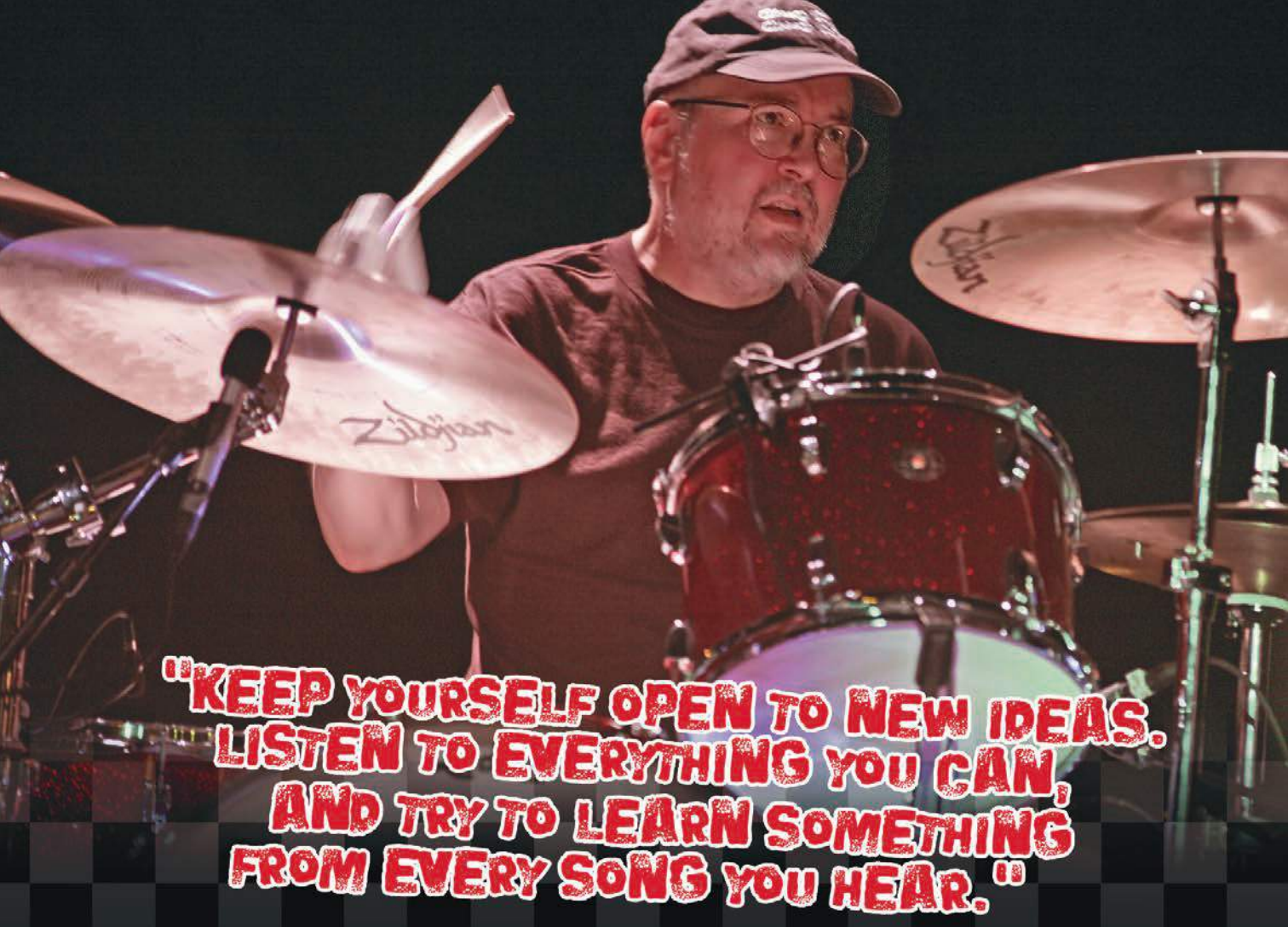
The veteran drummer and avid Ludwig collector is back, rocking hard on Cheap Trick's slammin' new release, *Rockford*.

Bun E. Carlos has been the drummer for Cheap Trick for as long as there's been a Cheap Trick. Over the course of their thirty-plus-year career, the band has scaled the highest heights of rock 'n' roll stardom. And through it all, Bun E. has been as solid as a rock, playing perfectly grooving parts that have driven the band. Besides his drumming, in recent years Bun E.'s interest and knowledge of vintage drums has made him a celebrity in that area as well.

In the late 1970s, learning the beat to Cheap Trick's "I Want You To Want Me" was mandatory for any drummer hoping to get a rock gig. "Surrender" was also on the setlist. In fact, that song was my first introduction to the drumming style of Bun E. Carlos. It boggled my mind that one guy could come up with two such dissimilar feels and have them both be hit songs. What also impressed me was the stamina required to play those songs. It wasn't until I met Bun E. years later through our mutual hobby of drum collecting that I gained an understanding of where he's coming from.

With a name like his, you might expect Bun E. to be some kind of wisecracking, show business guy. Instead, he's about as brisk and to the point as you could hope for. There's not a lot of room for B.S. in Bun E.'s schedule, so he's learned to cut it to a minimum. But there's always time for a discussion about cool drums, great songs, and the people who motivated him to play the way he does.

To get a good idea of what Bun E. is all about as a drummer, all you have to do is pick up any of the sixteen or so Cheap Trick albums and check out his loose but very grooving licks. Bun E. draws from his considerable and varied influences to produce a style that is uniquely his own. From the hits like "I Want You To Want Me" to later songs such as "Anytime," off the ill-fated *Cheap Trick* album, you'll hear a wide range of influences tastefully melded into Bun E.'s very own flavor.



"KEEP YOURSELF OPEN TO NEW IDEAS. LISTEN TO EVERYTHING YOU CAN, AND TRY TO LEARN SOMETHING FROM EVERY SONG YOU HEAR."

As we talked during this interview, I learned a lot more about a man who I thought I already knew pretty well. From his recent struggle with debilitating back pain and the surgery that ultimately enabled him to get on with his career, to the unique "hit and run" recording style of the band, this is no average drummer. To say that Bun E. is dedicated to drumming is a major understatement.

A voracious listener, Bun E. has an almost encyclopedic knowledge of rock 'n' roll. He was, and still is, an ardent fan of the great drummers he listened to while growing up. What's really refreshing is that when you ask him where one of his signature licks comes from, you get a real answer, down to how he thinks he was influenced to play that lick and how his interpretation differs from the inspirational model.

For example, I asked him about the "Anytime" beat. "That beat is a take on something that Ginger Baker played as part of his 'Toad' drum solo when he was with Cream." Another writer once commented that the sloshy, slightly funky groove on the song "One More" on the band's brand-new album, *Rockford*, sounded like it was influenced by Aerosmith. Bun E. freely admits that, after touring with Aerosmith for several months a few years back, he did pick up on some of Joey Kramer's feel for that song. But he goes a step beyond to say that the initial inspiration came from Greg Errico on Sly & The Family Stone's performance of "Dance To The Music" from Woodstock.

The most interesting thing about *Rockford*, which seems to have taken a lot of folks by surprise, is the scope of the music contained on it. This is largely due to the way it was recorded. While most bands will write songs, rehearse them, and maybe even introduce them on tour before recording begins, the tendency is to go in and produce the album in one fell swoop. Cheap Trick takes a different approach. They tend to look at the upcoming tour schedule, see if there are any holes, book time in studios along the way, and record as they go with a variety of producers. (Some of the tracks on the "new" album were recorded as far back as 1995.)

Cheap Trick is open to working with a variety of producers, and as such, their albums reflect this eclectic approach. Rather than a single thematic sound, like most albums have, Cheap Trick records have a surprise waiting around every corner. Just when you think you've figured out the direction, it changes, and the effect of a different set of ears and decisions alters the picture. But each album still has the distinctive sound that can only be made by Cheap Trick.

MD: How long did it take to put *Rockford* together?

Bun E: About thirteen years, actually. We did a record in 1997 with producer Ian Taylor, but the record label we were on had all kinds of problems at the time the album was to be released. We had some extra tracks from those sessions, including the song "Come On Come On Come On." We also had a couple of tracks from some Steve Albini–produced sessions from '98, '99, and 2000. We had one track from the last Chris Shaw–produced album as well.

We went to LA and cut one song ["Perfect Stranger"] with Linda Perry as the co-writer. There were some songs recorded with Julian Raymond [head of A&R at Capital records], and five or six songs at the studio in Florida with Pinky and Jack Douglas. Some had twenty-four tracks, while some had as many as a *hundred* tracks. So we called up Steve Thompson [Guns N' Roses] and asked if he wanted to mix it. And there it is.

MD: How was this album different from previous ones?

Bun E: Well, instead of parking ourselves at one studio for three or four weeks, and spending a few hundred thousand dollars, we cut the drums "hit and run" at different studios around the country while on tour. The most fun was tracking in LA. We did one track, "If It Takes A Lifetime," with Julian Raymond of Capitol Records. We'd done "Cold Turkey" with Julian in 1995, and a few years later we did the theme for *That '70s Show* with him.

MD: So for part of the album you were working with a producer that you were already comfortable with?

Bun E: Yes, but they were tracks that were already in the can when this album came up. Even more interesting was working with Linda Perry. I walked into her studio in Burbank, and there was a lovely Citrus Mod Ludwig set with a Dunnett titanium snare drum, just like the new Ludwig/Dunnett model, The Chief. Ross Garfield, the Drum Doctor, had been in to set up a kit for the session and told Linda, "I think Bun E. will like this setup." He was *correct*.

MD: What's the biggest difference between recording hit-and-run and going in and doing it all at once?

Bun E: The advantage of recording hit-and-run was that I was always fresh off a

Bun E's Tour Kit

Drums: Ludwig 9-ply maple in red sparkle finish

- **A.** 6½x14 maple snare (or 5x14 Black Beauty)
- **B.** 9x13 tom
- **C.** 16x16 floor tom
- **D.** 16x26 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 14" New Beat hi-hats (four rivets in bottom cymbal)
2. 20" A medium-thin crash
3. 20" K medium dry ride
4. 18" A medium-thin crash

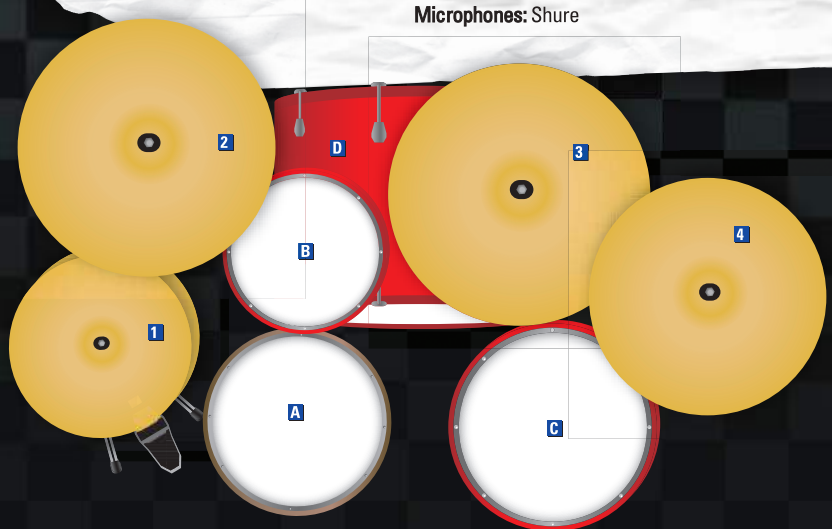
Percussion: LP cowbell

Hardware: Ludwig stands and hi-hat pedal, DW 5000 bass drum pedal (medium spring tension) with Ludwig felt beater, Brazil Products stick tape, Wilson gloves

Heads: Remo coated Ambassador on snare batter, Ludwig snare-side (medium tuning, no muffling), Ludwig coated medium heads on tops and bottoms of toms (medium tuning, no muffling), Ludwig clear (with extra ply around edge) for bass drum batter, single-ply white coated medium with hole on front (low tuning)

Sticks: Pro-Mark Bun E. Carlos Custom model

Microphones: Shure



gig, usually the night before, so the chops came easy in the studio. It's a great way to track drums.

MD: Is that the way you usually approach a record?

Bun E: We've always recorded sort of hit-and-run. Wherever we are, we record a song or two. But this is the first record since *Budokan* where we put it all together for ourselves and had assistance in the mixing process.

MD: Let's go back a ways and look at your beginnings. How did your right-handed/left-handed approach come about?

Bun E: I didn't have any lessons when I was young, I just learned how to play on my own. I started out playing left-handed, but when I started going to see bands, the drummers all played right-handed. In the '60s and '70s, when I'd go to concerts, I took notes—equipment lists, set lists, anything that I thought I needed to remember from the show that would help me be a better drummer.

MD: Why did you start playing right-handed?

Bun E: I lived in an apartment for years and didn't have a place to practice. I never practiced a whole lot until around '85 or '86, when I moved into a house. I started learning things right-handed that I had played left-handed. For a long time I'd switch back and forth even within the show from a left-handed style to a right-handed one. I still switch from right to left occasionally.

MD: Were there any interesting results from learning to play right-handed?

Bun E: There were lots of things that I picked up as a result. While I was practicing, I discovered what Ginger was doing in his solo on "Toad." Twenty years later, that part morphed into the intro to "Anytime," a song on the *Cheap Trick* album from the mid-'90s.

MD: The band had already been together for a while, so what was it that prompted you to start working on your technique?

Bun E: When we went to record the second album, the producer wanted an intro lick, and I couldn't do it. At the time, I had a very limited drum vocabulary. I told him there were two licks that I knew would fit in there. That's the way I think of it. I try to find the one lick that fits into each spot in the song. But at that time, I only *knew* a couple of licks.

MD: Do you still practice a lot?

Bun E: I practice every day. I'll practice about half or two thirds of a show, playing along to the songs in my head. I'll do ten or twelve Cheap Trick songs. Then later in the day I'll play along with songs by other bands that I like to practice with.

MD: So you draw a lot of inspiration from listening to music you like?

Bun E: Records and things that I've always listened to are the source of most of what I play. It just gets filtered through my

"These drums really sing." Modern Drummer, August 2006

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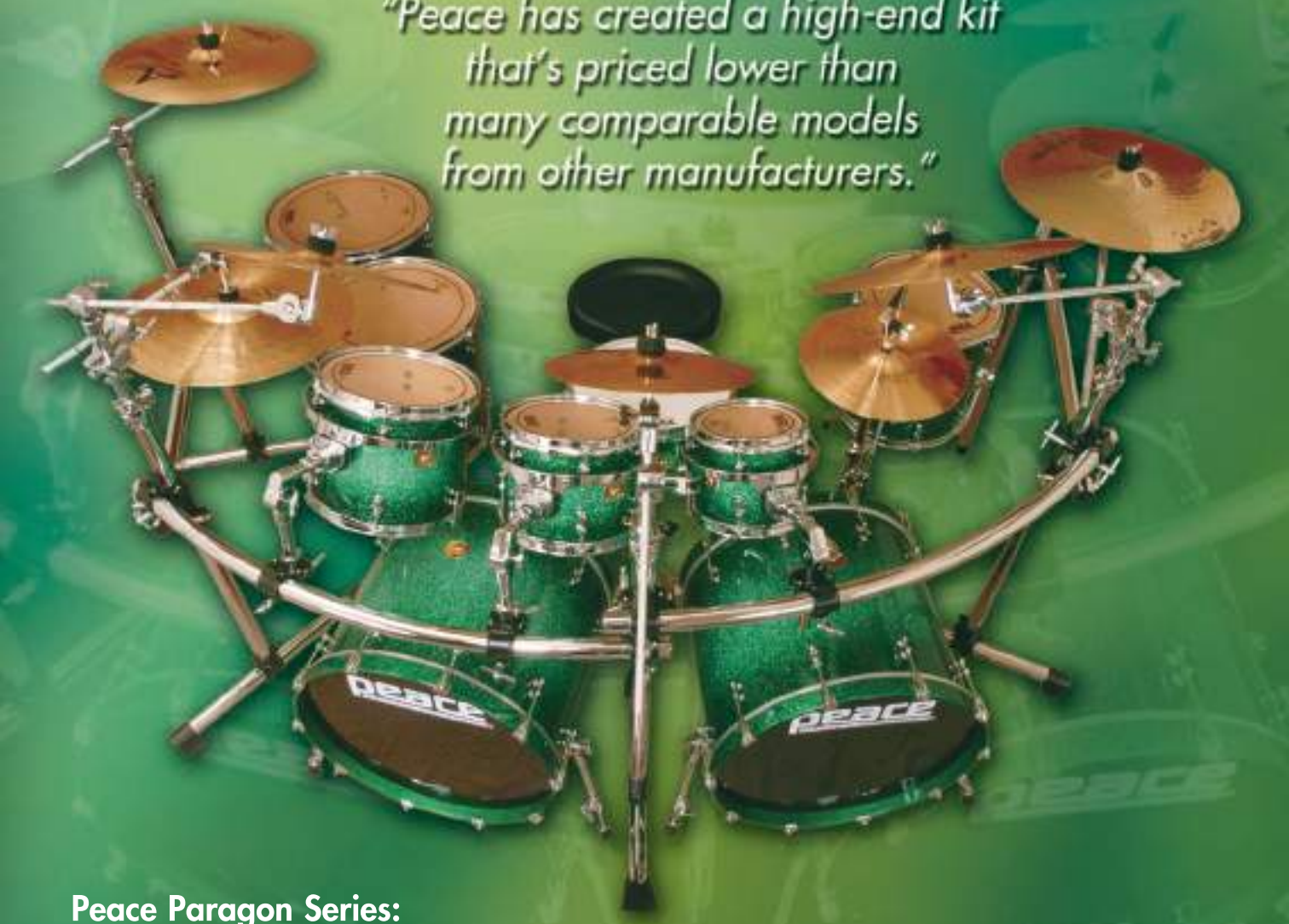

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technique, and I become the sum of all I've listened to. Also, if I see a band and the drummer plays a lick that's particularly interesting to me, I'll go home and try to work it out during my practice sessions.

MD: Do you ever get frustrated trying to learn licks from memory or from records?

Bun E: A lot of my favorite songs I just can't *play*, like "Witch Doctor" from John Mayall, or "I Ain't Got You" by The Yardbirds. I know these songs backwards and forwards in my head, but for some reason when I sit down to play them it just doesn't happen. But later on when we're working on a Cheap Trick song, we'll play something that rings a bell, and the part that didn't sound right when I was playing along with the original sounds right with us.

MD: Do you play with any other bands outside of Cheap Trick?

Bun E: I get hired to do a lot of different sessions with bands around town [Rockford/Chicago area]. Mostly I'll do them with the singer, and the other parts are flown in later. Playing music you're not well known for playing is a good way to broaden your horizons and learn something new.

MD: I've been listening to you for a long time, and I have to say that I'm enjoying the writing that's going on more on the albums from recent years than I did earlier on. How does a band keep coming up with new and fresh ideas after thirty years?

Bun E: It's all about keeping yourself open to new ideas. Listen to everything you can, and try to learn something from every song you hear.

MD: Let's switch gears and talk about another thing that you are known for. How long have you been collecting drums?

Bun E: Since the late 1970s.

MD: What got you into that?

Bun E: It's a kind of funny story. I answered an ad for some cymbals for sale, and when I went to buy them, the seller threw in a late-1930s Black Diamond Pearl Slingerland Radio King kit as a sweetener on the deal. Since the deal was only for $125 worth of cymbals, I came out smelling like a rose.

MD: You got this old kit as a perk on a cymbal deal? What did you do with it?

Bun E: I put the kit together and played it! They didn't break when I'd hit them with those 3' sticks I used at the end of the night. Those are the drums that you hear on the *Live At Budokan* album.

MD: Hang on a second…3'-long drumsticks?

Bun E: We were rebelling against the long drum solos that were in vogue at the time, so I did a thirty-second solo with these giant sticks. I called it the anti-drum solo. I'd bust cymbal stands, cymbals, about a cymbal a week—and I was buying them myself then! I still have most of my earlier cymbals that didn't break.

MD: I've watched you over the years go from a "buy everything old" collector to a WFL collector and now to your current focus on all things Ludwig. How did that come about?

Bun E: Back before eBay, it was all about making phone calls and talking to other collectors. Once in a while you'd get a list

CHEAP TRACKS

Here are recordings Bun E. has played on that he feels best represent his playing:

Artist	Album
Cheap Trick	At Budokan
John Lennon	Wonsaponatime
Cheap Trick	Rockford
Cheap Trick	Next Position Please
Wandering Sons	tba (November 2006 release)

Here are some of his favorite "drummer" records:

Artist	Album	Drummer
Dave Clark Five	Greatest Hits	Dave Clark
The Who	Sing My Generation	Keith Moon
The Beatles	Revolver	Ringo Starr
Jimi Hendrix	Are You Experienced	Mitch Mitchell
Cream	Fresh Cream	Ginger Baker
Plus anything by Charlie Watts		

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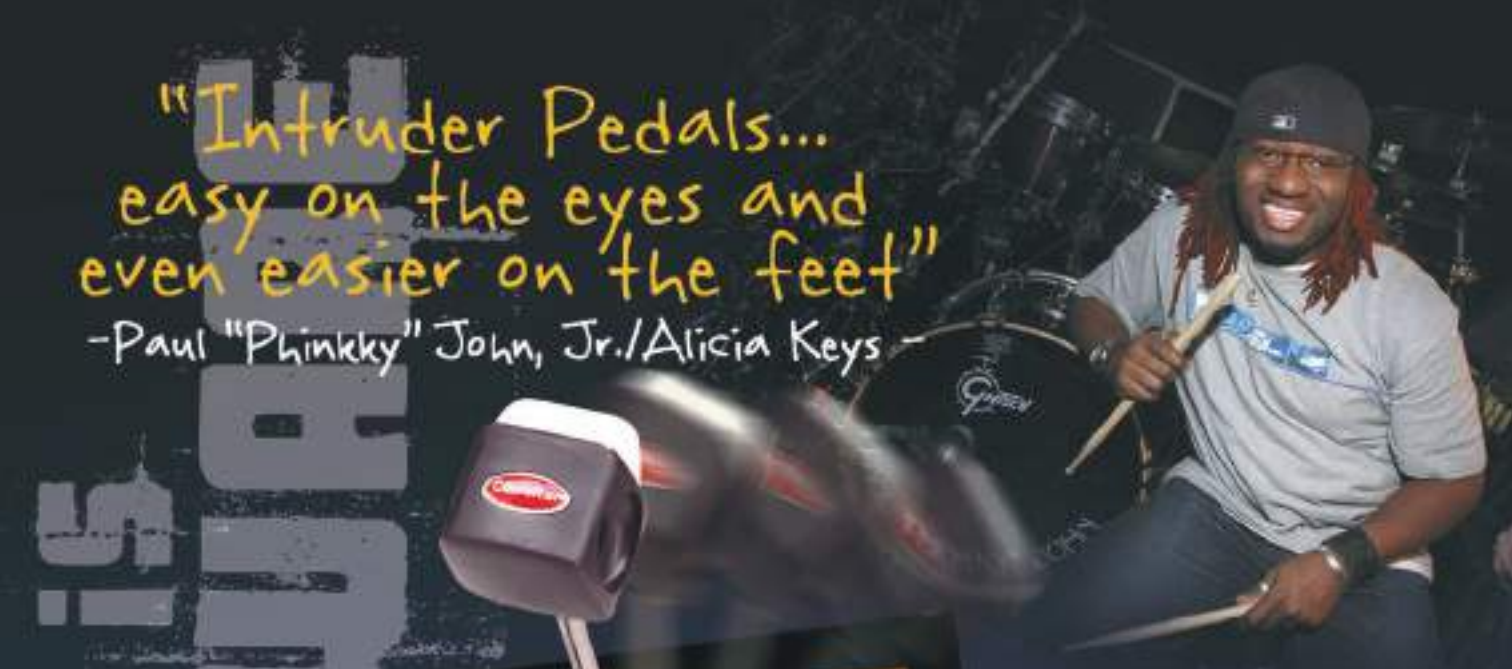

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from another collector and you and he would swap or sell stuff to each other. I look back at some of those lists and just groan when I think of all the cool stuff I passed on. Gradually I drifted more towards Ludwig and finally made the choice to focus on that.

MD: What was it that made you progress in your collecting from general to specific items?

Bun E: You get a drumkit, take it apart, and see what makes it tick. Then you either move on or get more drums like it with different finishes, rare stuff. It was probably the finishes that drew me in the most. I've gotten to the point where I collect prototypes from Ludwig and limited editions. But my ultimate goal is to have one of every rare-finished Ludwig drum ever built. Some things were made forty or fifty years ago that were so unusual that they never caught on in their own time. But now, due to their small production numbers, these things are super rare.

MD: The building where you practice and keep your collection is almost as impressive as the collection itself. What motivated you to build such a large storage area for your drums?

Bun E: Where I lived previously, I had three small houses: a guest house full of old drums, another with my touring drums, and a third where I lived. When I moved to the country, there was a horse barn already on the property that I fixed up. With the help of my good friend Randy Rainwater, we poured a concrete floor and built a floating floor from plans I found in an issue of *Modern Drummer*. Randy built the floor for me.

Then I had the building insulated, wired, and drywalled. Randy found some industrial shelving that was just perfect for displaying large things like drums. Now I have three rows of 4x8 storage shelves about 12' high. I can have all my drums out, and you can see about 90% of the collection. The top row is too rare or fragile to play, and the center and bottom rows are all playable kits. I rotate them through the practice kits that are set up in the center of the room.

MD: I can say from experience that it's a fairly mind-boggling sight to walk into the room and see all the rare finishes and cool vintage pieces you've collected over the years. With all those drums to choose from, do you ever have trouble picking just one?

Bun E: Maybe a little bit. But right now I have a 22"/12"/14" in red sparkle with a 5x14 snare. Then I have an early-'70s 3-ply with a virgin 26" bass drum, 16" and 18" floor toms, and a 13" rack. On days when I feel John Bonham–ish, I use the 15" rack tom.

MD: It must be tough deciding which drumset to play today!

Bun E: It's a pleasure to have a choice. But if you change your mind too often or if you get too picky, you wind up spending your days setting up drums and tearing them back down instead of just enjoying playing them.

MD: What's your latest addition to the collection?

Bun E: I just picked up a Mod Orange Blue/Olive Ludwig canister throne! Since canister thrones were pretty much on the way out when Mod Orange came out in the late '60s, finding them in rare finishes like Mod Orange, Psychedelic Red, and Citrus Mod is close to impossible.

MD: Given the scope of your collection, it's hard to imagine anything that you don't have already. But what are you looking for now?

Bun E: I'm looking for a Ludwig Triumphal model—which is a really ornate gold-plated drum from the late 1920s—and a 1935 Ludwig Silver Anniversary. You know, things I can't afford to buy!

MD: Let's take another turn and talk about how you're dealing with your back pain. A few years ago when I came to visit you at a show, you were complaining of some serious back pain. I've since met a lot of drummers who had problems with their backs after years of playing, but now you're like

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a spring chicken. What happened?

Bun E: About 1992, my right leg started to bother me. Whenever I'd sit down to play, I'd get a burning pain. I went to see some doctors, and they discovered a pinched nerve due to a problem with a disk in my lower back. The way to fix it was with surgery. But at that time, there was a six-month recovery period, so I decided to just live with the pain. After four or five years with it, I'd had enough.

MD: I can see why. But that has to be one of the scariest types of surgery to have due to the risk of permanent damage to the spinal cord if something goes wrong.

Bun E: That's mainly what kept me from having the surgery in the first place. But in 2001, my doctor told me there was a new procedure. About that time I lifted a suitcase the wrong way and what had been an inconvenience before became debilitating in one short instant. It got so bad I couldn't play.

MD: I remember that. You guys were in the middle of a tour. How did you deal with that situation?

Bun E: Daxx Nielsen [Cheap Trick guitarist Rick Nielsen's son] came in and subbed for me, and I had the operation. They fixed two vertebrae and two disks. One was a decompression on the disk and a delaminate on the vertebrae. They basically shaved the disks and vertebrae around the pinched nerve so it had room to work again.

MD: With the pain involved, I'm sure you were reluctant to have the surgery, but it seemed like you went from being anti-surgery to jumping on the operating table overnight.

Bun E: After a certain number of years with no nerve stimulus, the muscles will start to atrophy. So it was critical for me to get it done when I did, or lose the use of those muscles. The result is that I still have a bad back, but it doesn't hurt anymore, and my leg works normally again. I'm *really* careful about picking things up these days.

MD: How hard was the recovery, and did you notice a change after the surgery?

Bun E: The improvement was immediate. Three weeks after the surgery I was able to limp over to the drumset and practice. Six weeks later I was back out with the band.

MD: I would assume that that experience made you stop and think about your health a little more. What kind of exercise regimen do you use to keep yourself in shape?

Bun E: I try to walk two miles a day, and that seems to help me stay sort of in shape. But my main workout is practicing hard every day, whether I'm on the road or not.

MD: I've had the privilege of working on a few shows where your band and REO Speedwagon were playing on the same stage. I really enjoyed visiting with Matt, your tech. How many techs are out there on the road with you?

Bun E: Well, there's stage left, the guy who takes care of Robin and Tom's stuff, then there's stage right, the guy who takes care of all of Rick's guitars. I have my drum tech, Matt Sabin, and then we have Carla, our road manager. We also have a production manager and lighting and sound engineers. That's eight techs on the road with us.

MD: After thirty years, Cheap Trick seems more like a family than a band. How long do you see yourselves recording and touring?

Bun E: We feel like we still have something to contribute. I know that someday I'll hit the drum and scream in pain. But for now, we're all playing well, and we get along pretty good. I get my way about a fourth of the time, and three times I'll be compromising, but it's a remarkably equal partnership. We're all comfortable suggesting things to each other. But it's a band, and we have to be prepared to compromise.

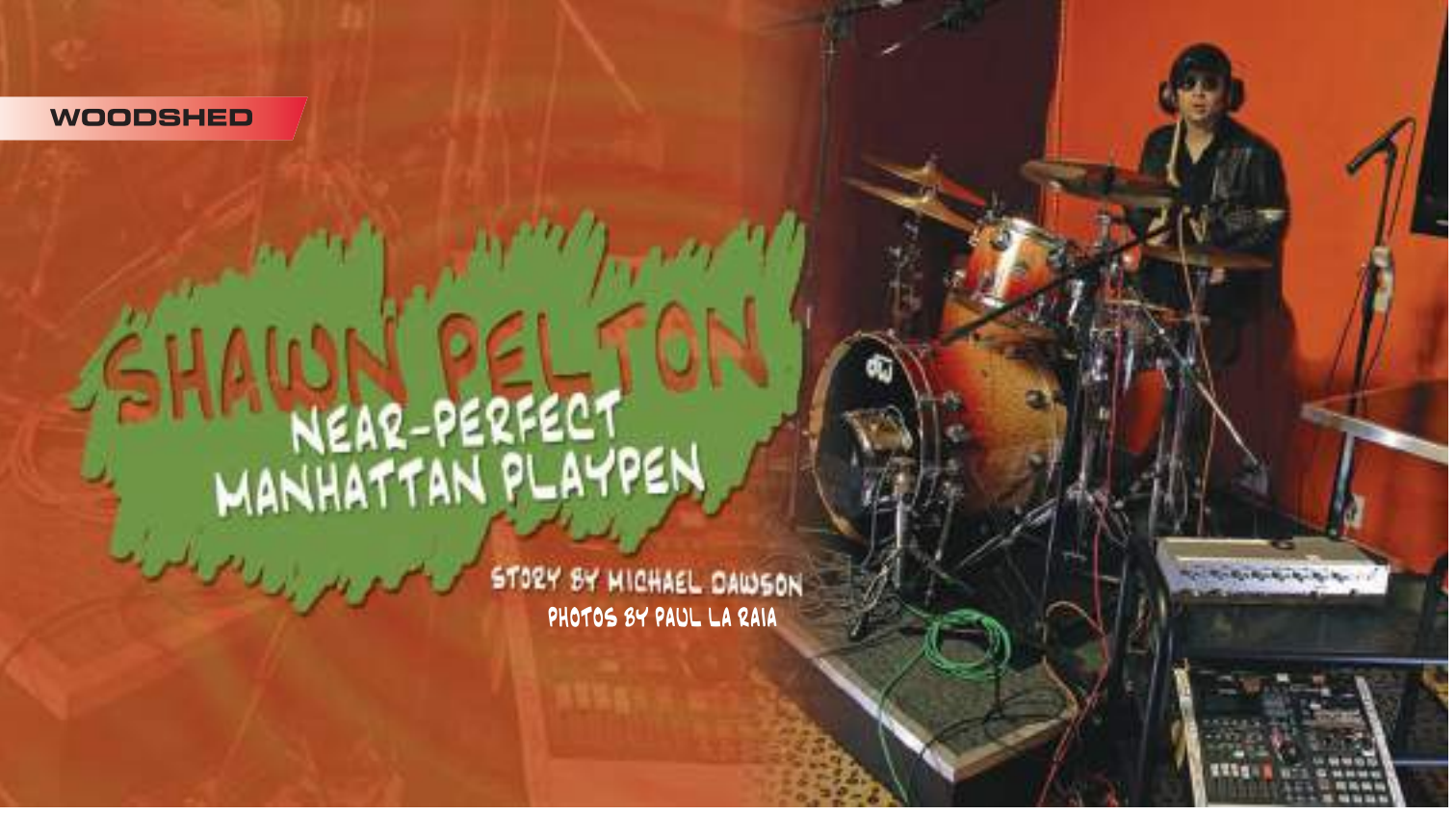
When we started, I was twenty-two, and I sure didn't think I'd still be doing it at fifty-five. Back in the beginning, people would ask us how long we'd tour, and we'd say until 2000, because back then we thought we'd be living on the moon by then. All of a sudden 2000 came along, and we didn't feel like stopping! When it gets to the point where we don't enjoy it anymore, we'll hang it up.

John Aldridge is a drummer and the founder and editor of *Not So Modern Drummer* magazine, a publication devoted to the vintage and custom drum community. In addition to engraving Ludwig's Black Beauty series of drums for over fifteen years, he is also a touring drum tech, currently on the road with veteran rockers REO Speedwagon.

SHAWN PELTON

NEAR-PERFECT MANHATTAN PLAYPEN

STORY BY MICHAEL DAWSON
PHOTOS BY PAUL LA RAIA



"I never thought I'd be able to get a major-label drum track in a space like this," reflects longtime *Saturday Night Live* drummer and NYC session ace Shawn Pelton, referring to the recently completed project studio/drum room in his East Village Manhattan apartment. "I thought I would be able to wig out and get okay recordings," he continues. "But the fact that I got a track out of here for Rosanne Cash's album *Black Cadillac* is a real shock."

Like a lot of New York drummers who've spent considerable time and money trekking to the city's various dismal rehearsal spaces to put in time behind the kit, Shawn's initial idea was to find a way to practice at home. "I was lucky to be able to combine my apartment with the one next door," says the drummer. "Then I thought it would be amazing if I could construct some kind of practice space in here. I envisioned that I would have to keep the drums stuffed up to cut down on the noise, so I didn't expect it to turn into a realistic recording studio."

Because he has neighbors on all sides, Shawn had to be careful to keep things as soundproof as possible when converting his spare bedroom into his dream drum pad. "A lot of people told me that this would be impossible to pull off," Pelton explains. "But after checking out *Modern Drummer*'s soundproofing book and talking to someone I knew in the construction business, I decided to try to build a room within a room. For the floor, we alternated between layers of plyboard, black vinyl, homosote, and cement boards. The layers of different materials help keep the sound from going straight through the floor."

"I also built an 8" drum riser out of the same materials," Shawn goes on. "I put metal springs between the layers to help soak up more of the low end. My neighbors below me can still hear some of the low end, so it's not *completely* soundproof. During the day, I can get down and do some recording. But my dream of having a totally soundproof setup where I could go crazy at 3:00 A.M. wasn't very realistic. But it's better than nothing." In addition to the floating floor and riser, Shawn hung a secondary ceiling on springs and enclosed the room with a massive airlock door.

Sitting on top of the 6x6 drum riser is a set of DW drums and Zildjian cymbals that are miked up and ready to record. In order to achieve a larger-than-life drum sound in such tight quarters, Shawn relies on a combination of great acoustic sounds, quality mics, and creative electronic wizardry. He records everything digitally on one of two laptop computers: a MusicXPC M2 or a Macintosh G4 667. His digital audio workstation is Ableton Live, but he's also equipped with

Pro Tools. "Pro Tools is such a standard that it's hard to ignore," says Pelton. "Fortunately, with things like esession.com, I can do remote recordings where I'll send files to people over the Internet. I thought I was going to have to get into Pro Tools to do that, but I usually get a stereo mix of the artist's tracks that can be loaded into any recording software. That's allowed me to keep rockin' out with Ableton Live."

In addition to Live, Shawn uses a combination of plug-ins and effects to enhance his recordings. One of those is a sound replacer called Drumagog. "With Drumagog," says Shawn, "I can blend in any kind of sample with my natural drum sound. The results are really impressive."

From Drumagog, Shawn feeds MIDI information to another favorite plug-in, a virtual drum module called BFD. "I'll use the MIDI out of Drumagog, which might be used on my bass drum track, to trigger the room sounds in BFD," he explains. "That's how I can simulate a bigger room. BFD lets me control a virtual mix of direct signal, overheads, and several room mics."

The final element in achieving top-quality drum sounds is a compression plug-in from PSP called Vintage Warmer. Says Shawn, "These plug-ins help make the sound more present."

The resulting drum sound is so convincing that it's hard to believe it was produced in a home studio outfitted with affordable, consumer-grade gear. "It's not like I'm sitting here with a $50,000 Neve board and other expensive stuff that's only found in big studios," says Shawn. "I'm not saying that what I can get in here sounds like it was recorded at New York's famous studio Avatar A. But it's amazing to me that you can pull this type of sound together in a home studio." Pelton smiles, "Plus, having this kind of setup in my home has been a dream come true."

Here's Shawn's spare bedroom before construction.

To promote a more even and developed sound, the sliding glass door in Shawn's space is blocked with a heavy curtain, the back wall is covered with Auralex C24 acoustic panels, and hanging from the ceiling are Auralex SpaceCoupler units.

GEAR BOX

Drums

DW Exotic in Rich Red Fade over quilted maple with chrome-finish hardware
6x14 solid snare drum
9x12 rack tom
14x16 floor tom
18x22 bass drum

Cymbals

Zildjian (various makes and models)

Heads

Coated Ambassadors on snare and toms (bottom head slightly higher than batter) and coated PowerStroke III or Renaissance PowerStroke III on the kick (both heads as low as possible without wrinkling). Snare tuning adjusts for each track, but the bottom head isn't very tight. For muffling, Shawn uses Moon Gel, Zero Rings, or a deerskin glove (on his snare), and a DW pillow in the kick.

Microphones

Shawn is constantly experimenting with different combinations of microphones. Here's a list of some of his favorites.
Kick: AKG D112 (with Earthworks Kick Pad)
Snare: Shure SM57
Toms: AKG C418 clip-ons
Hi-hat: AKG 451 or M-Audio Solaris
Overheads: Royer SF-24 stereo ribbon mic, Earthworks TC25s, or AKG 451s.
For special effects, Shawn sends a signal from a Shure SM57 to a Roland SP-808 (dubbed the "Vibeulator") to get a gritty semi-distorted sound, and he uses a rewired telephone receiver for a filtered "lo-fi" effect.

Recording Hardware

M-Audio Octane microphone preamp
M-Audio Project Mix I/O digital mixer
M-Audio Trigger Finger and Korg Microkontrol MIDI controllers
Akai MPC2000XL sampler
RME Digiface PCMIA soundcard
MusicXPC M2 and Macintosh G4 667 laptops

Software And Plug-ins

Ableton Live (for audio recording)
Reason 3.0, Stylus RMX, Native Instruments Battery (for creating loops)
Drumagog sound replacer (to blend digital samples with acoustic drum sounds)
BFD (for simulated room sound)
PSP Audioware Vintage Warmer compression

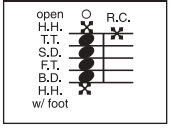
Style & Analysis

Tony Williams

Part 1: Rudiments

by Jeremy Brown

MUSIC KEY



Tony Williams made an incredible impact on jazz, as well as most modern drumming genres. It was Tony's association with Miles Davis between 1963 and 1969 that led to his prominence in drumming history.

Taking a starring role with the Miles Davis Quintet, Tony stunned the jazz world with innovative technique and creative musicianship. He developed an entirely new approach to accompanying soloists by interjecting his own soloistic ideas instead of relying on conventional comping rhythms. This changed the role of the jazz drummer, making him an integral part of a group's improvisational scheme.

Tony prolonged the resolution of tension by avoiding conventional points of rhythmic release. Instead of resolving at common places like the "&" of beat 4 or the downbeat of beat 1, Williams favored less settling places for his phrase endings, such as the "&" of beat 3. This approach complemented the approaches of Miles and saxophonist Wayne Shorter, who were constantly searching for new ideas in their improvisation, compositions, and arrangements. The rhythm section, rounded out by bassist Ron Carter and pianist Herbie Hancock, also had an uncanny mental connection that resulted in a high level of musical communication. Collectively, they could adjust any aspect of the music—dynamics, groove, or tempo—at any point of a performance.

The quintet's recordings are important landmarks in jazz. They represent one of the most important groups in jazz history, and they document the development of Tony's unique approach to the drumset. The articles in this series will use examples from those recordings to explain a few of Tony's most fascinating features—his use of rudiments, metric modulation, and dynamics.

This month, we'll focus on Tony's rudimental influence. The standard drumming rudiments had been explored by Tony's drumming idols—Philly Joe Jones, Max Roach, Art Blakey, and others—particularly during drum solos. But Williams took rudimental drumset ideas beyond those of his predecessors. The examples shown here are only a few of his innovations. For most of them, Tony split the rudiment between his snare drum and other surfaces.

Paradiddle-Diddle

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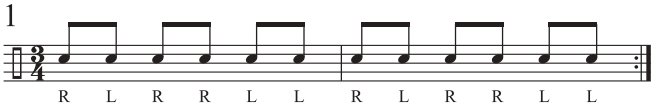
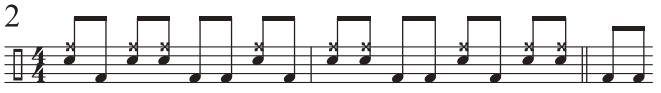

The paradiddle-diddle was one of Tony's most frequently used rudiments. On the performance of "Milestones" on the album *Miles In Berlin*, Williams plays the paradiddle-diddle between the bass drum and snare/ride unison strokes. (2:11)

Tony played a similar figure on the closing melody of "Side

2

Car II," from *Circle In The Round*. This time, he phrases the rudiment in sextuplets. (2:38)

The next examples are variations of the paradiddle-diddle that

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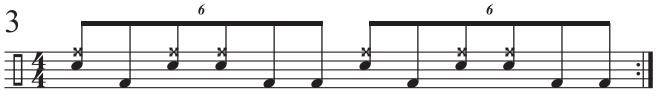
Tony often played between his hands. He regularly accented one or both of the rudiment's single strokes, buzzed the double strokes, or orchestrated the figure between the snare drum and cymbals. Here are two examples that appear in "Nefertiti," from the album of the same name. (6:43 and 7:03)

4

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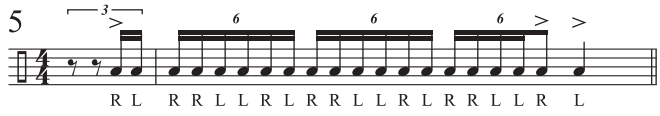
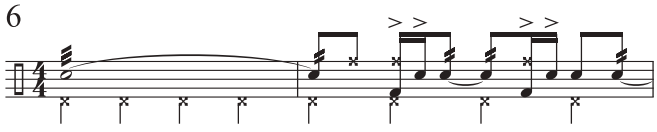
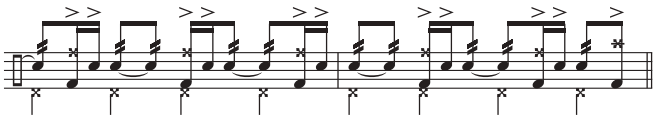

A similar idea occurs on "Side Car I," from *Circle In The Round*. (0:16)

Swiss Triplet

6



Tony's early work with Miles shows the beginning of his experi-

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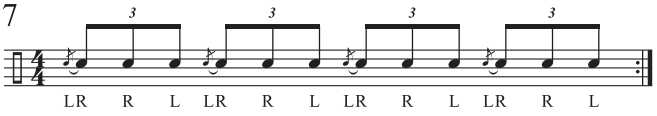
ments with the Swiss triplet. On "Masquelero," from *Sorcerer*, he divides the sticking between his snare drum and ride cymbal. (1:57 and 8:27)

He rephrases the rudiment using 8th notes on "Prince Of

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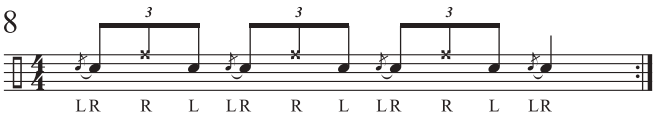
Darkness," also from *Sorcerer*. (1:56)

Later in his career, Tony derived some of his most explosive

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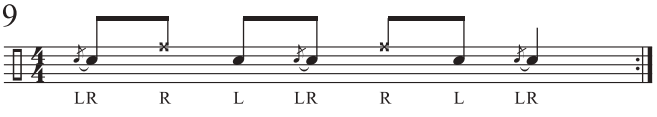
ideas from the Swiss triplet. Listen to "RJ" from *A Tribute To Miles* and "Domo" from *VSOP—Live Under The Sky* to hear how powerful this rudiment can be.

Flams

Tony's mastery of repeated flams allowed him to move around

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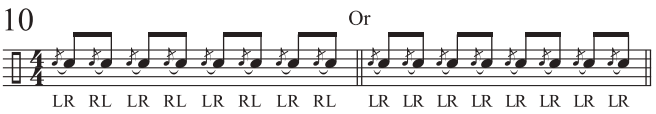
the drums with a lot of power. On the title track from the album *Circle In The Round*, Tony frequently played flams. Near the end of the recording, he moves the second of every three grace notes to the ride cymbal. (33:18)

Flam Five-Stroke Roll

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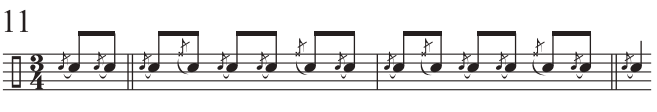
The flam five-stroke roll is another rudiment that Tony often

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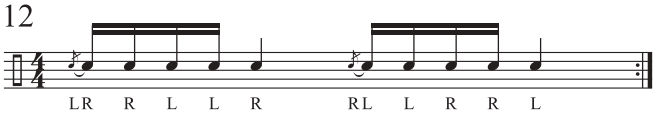
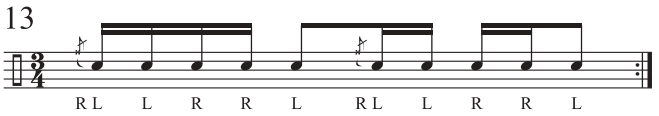

explored. In "Circle In The Round," he places the grace notes on the cymbal and finishes on the snare drum. (9:59)

"Gingerbread Boy"

13



During the opening melody of "Gingerbread Boy," from *Miles Smiles*, Tony plays a culmination of rudimental ideas. This excerpt shows his incredible ability to play around the melody of a tune using flams, paradiddle-diddle variations, and rolls of every kind. (0:00)

Tony's re-voicing of rudiments was unprecedented. His rudi-

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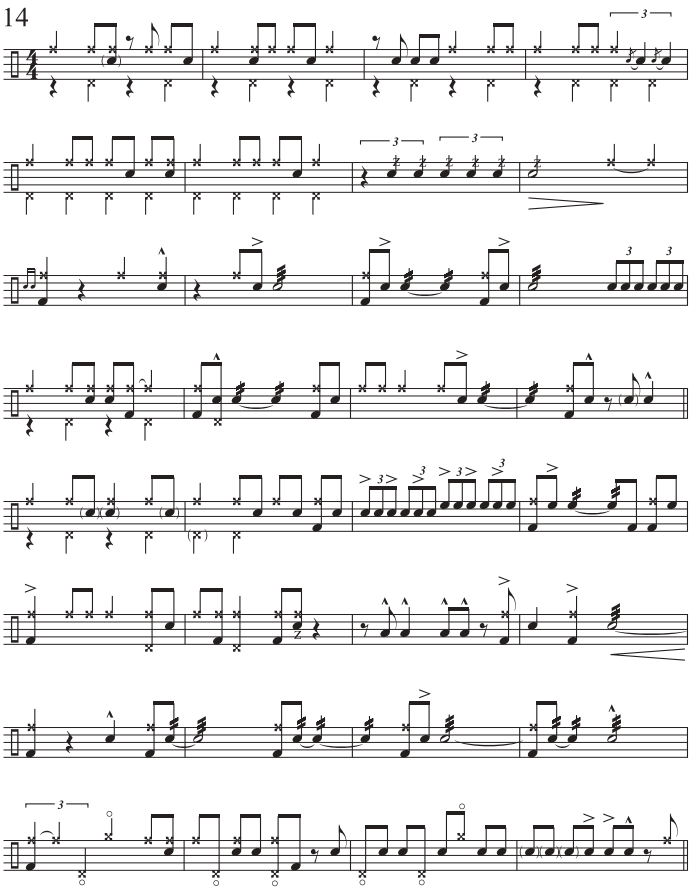

mental drumming concepts influenced many jazz drummers who followed, including Jack DeJohnette, Billy Cobham, and Billy Kilson. Part 2 of this series will focus on another aspect of Tony's influential playing with Miles—metric modulation.

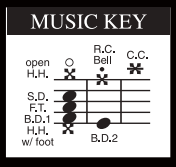
Strapping Young Lad's Gene Hoglan

The New Black

by Ed Breckenfeld

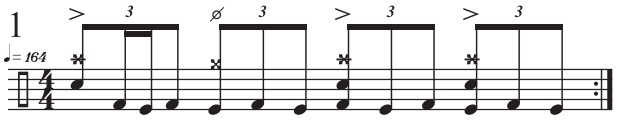
Gene Ambo

Look out, metalheads. Strapping Young Lad has a brand new album featuring more of leader Devin Townsend's unique and humorous take on the mayhem of the metal genre. More diverse and intense than the band's previous offerings, *The New Black* gives drummer Gene Hoglan ample opportunity to ply his power and skill with more adrenaline-pumping patterns. The grooves below are just the tip of the iceberg.



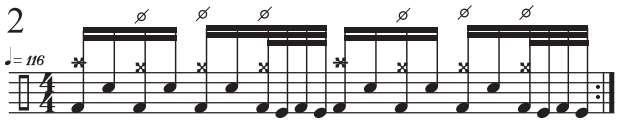
"Decimator"

On the opening track, Gene tosses in two 16th notes on the first beat to break up the unrelenting triplets of Townsend and Jed Simon's guitar riffs. (0:31)



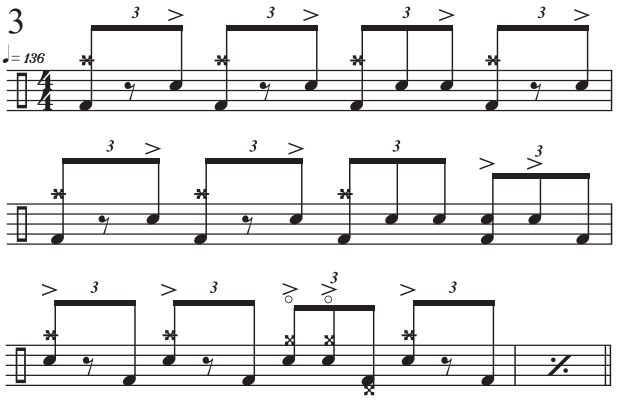
"U Suck"

Here, Hoglan intensifies his blast beat with a speedy double-bass quad at the end of each phrase. (0:27)



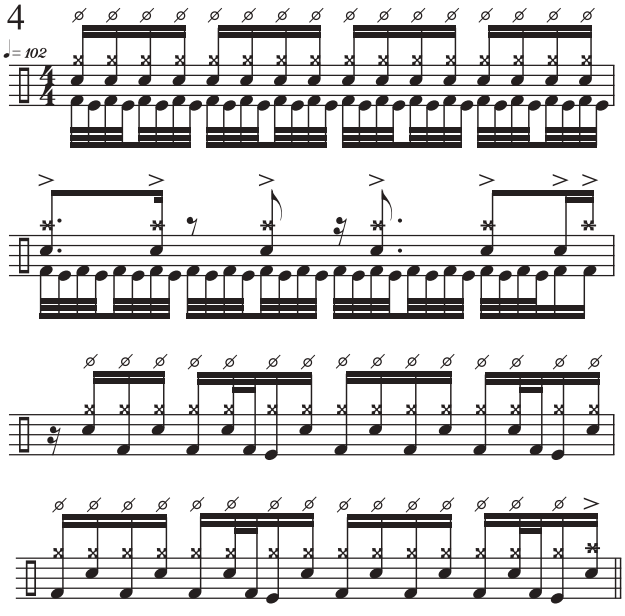
"Monument"

Hoglan has a knack for inverting drum patterns. In this track, he reverses the kick and snare placement in the second two measures. The result is that the first pattern grooves, while the second one *slams*. (0:24)



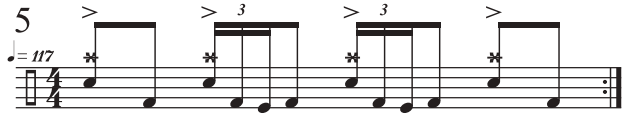
"Wrong Side"

The album's first single explodes with a terrific double-kick opening. Snare/hi-hat unison 16ths give way to syncopated accents that follow the song's guitar riff, while 32nd-note kicks keep blasting away. For the verse, the groove shifts to the upbeats, with some occasional double kicks to push things along. (0:00)

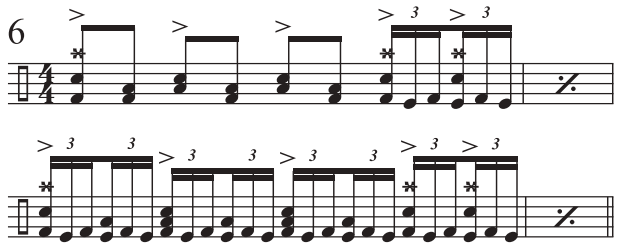


"Hope"

The chorus groove from this slow and heavy track is a lesson in effective beat design. Hoglan's simple rhythm on beats 1 and 4 accent the band's chord changes, while triplets on beats 2 and 3 underscore Devin Townsend's screamed vocal message. Gene switches between two crash cymbals for further emphasis. (1:06)

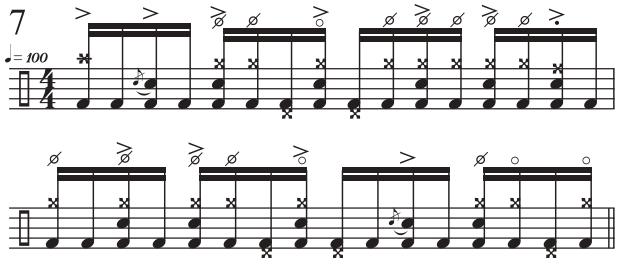


Later in the song, Hoglan uses triplets to punctuate the chord change accents (measures 1–2), followed by a continuous double-kick bombardment. (2:58)

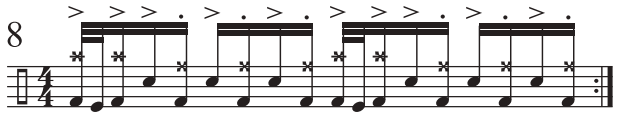


"Almost Again"

During the verse of this tune, Gene shows off his incredible single-bass technique. He employs steady 16ths with his right foot, while using the left to drop in some open and closed hi-hat accents. (0:00)

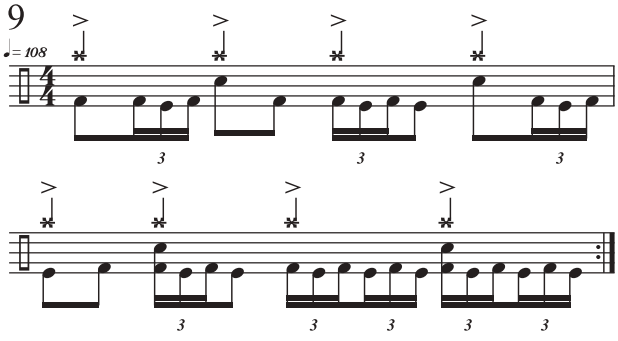


In the song's chorus, Hoglan demonstrates that a short burst of double kick can be just as effective as a non-stop barrage. (1:28)



"The New Black"

The title track revolves around an ominous 16th note–triplet guitar riff, which Gene propels with a powerful groove. The openness of the quarter-note crash pattern provides extra drive while keeping the beat uncluttered. (0:35)



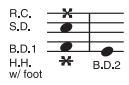
You can contact **Ed Breckenfeld** through his Web site: www.edbreckenfeld.com.

Pedal Bridging

Getting The Most From A Multi-Pedal Setup

by Daren Pfeifer

MUSIC KEY



Playing two pedals with one foot, or "pedal bridging," is not a new technique. Perhaps you've already seen it being used by many of today's top drummers, such as Dennis Chambers and Thomas Lang. But this "trick" is not something that only a select few drummers can perform. Instead, pedal bridging is an easily executed technique that any drummer can develop.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

The Setup

If you have a double pedal and a hi-hat stand, you're ready to go. Start by placing the hi-hat and slave pedal as closely together as possible (Figure 1). Depending on the type of hi-hat stand you have, you may be able to rotate the legs to make the positioning a little easier. But this setup is also possible with fixed-leg hi-hat stands.

Then, using a typical hi-hat foot position, move your left foot over until it rests exactly between the two pedals (Figure 2). You're not using the foot differently from how you normally would, so be careful not to twist your ankle.

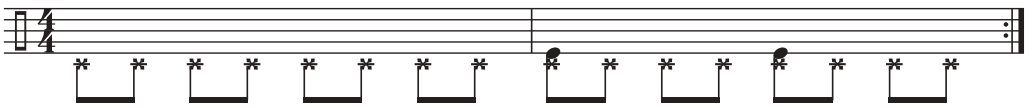
Practicing The Motion

Most of the technical battle with pedal bridging is unlearning physical habits. Begin by isolating the movement of the left foot from the hi-hat to the bridge. Since the distance your foot travels is exactly half of what you would normally move to get to the double pedal, be careful not to overshoot your target (Figure 3).

Your foot placement is important because you want a consistent sound for each note. It also helps to think about the direction the foot is moving as you're jumping from pedal to pedal. With time and practice, the technique will become second nature, and the sound will become increasingly more powerful and clear.

Examples 1-5 are exercises to help you develop the basic technique of pedal bridging. Your left foot plays 8th notes on the hi-hat, then moves slightly to the right to play both the hi-hat and the bass drum part. For all of these examples, work slowly, use a metronome, and strive for an even, controlled sound.

1



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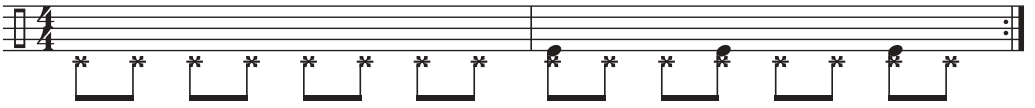

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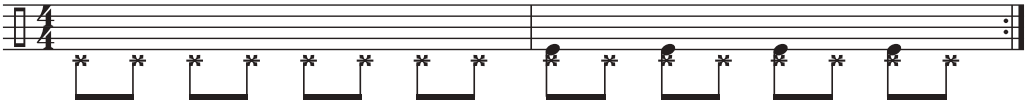

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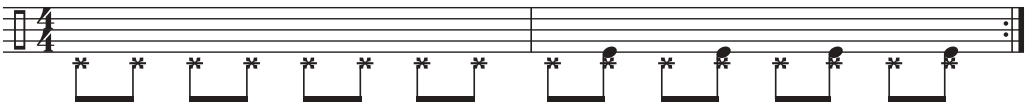

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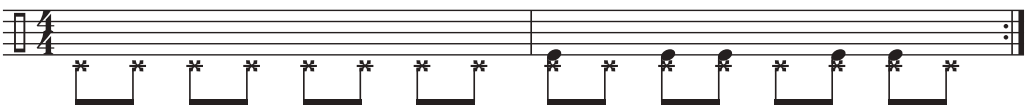
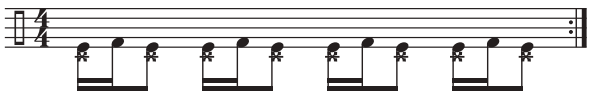


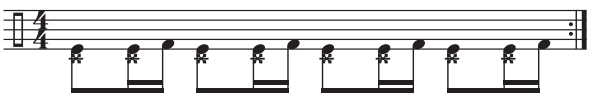
Quarter-Note Themes

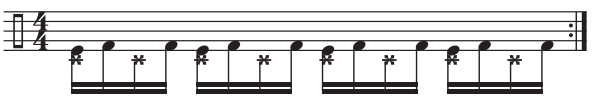
Now that you have an understanding of the basic technique of pedal bridging, it's time to build a rhythmic vocabulary. Examples A–E are basic rhythmic themes that use the left foot on the hi-hat and the left-side bass drum pedal. In these themes, the right foot plays the offbeats.

A



B



C

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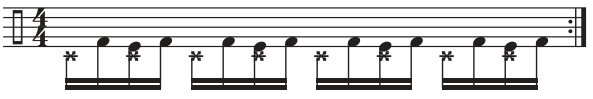
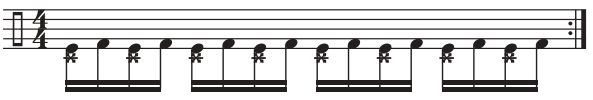
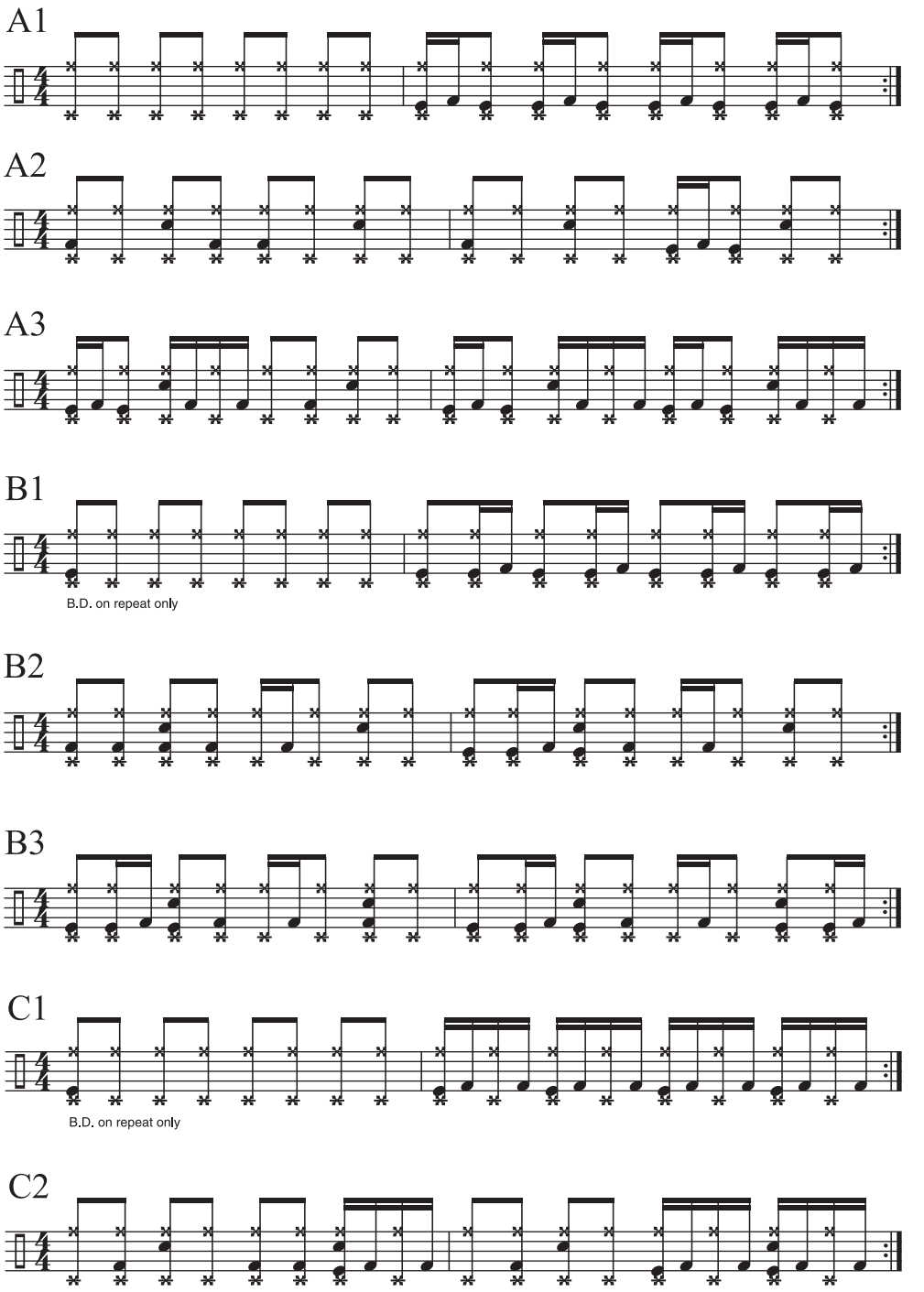


E

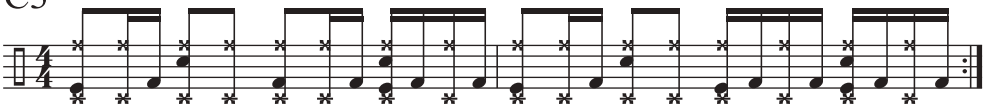


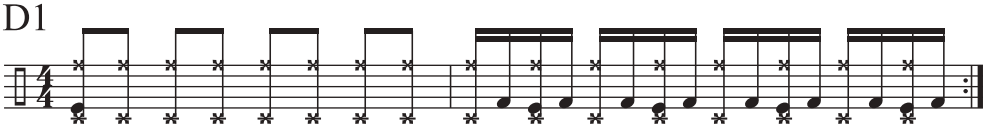
Two-Bar Phrases

Now it's time to apply these rhythmic themes to real musical situations. The remaining exercises in this article are two-measure phrases that are based on the previous rhythmic themes (A–E). I've included three variations for each theme. The first variation of each group (A1, B1, C1, D1, and E1) contains a measure of 8th notes followed by the theme. The second and third variations apply the themes in two-bar beats. Once you have these beats under control, get creative and come up with some of your own pedal-bridging grooves.



C3



D1

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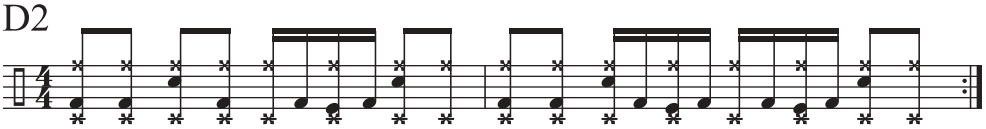

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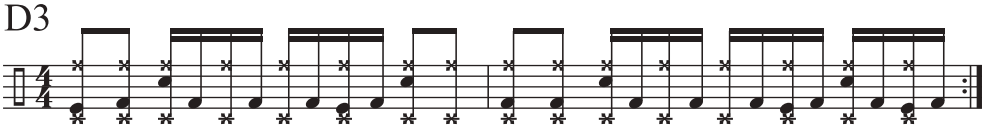

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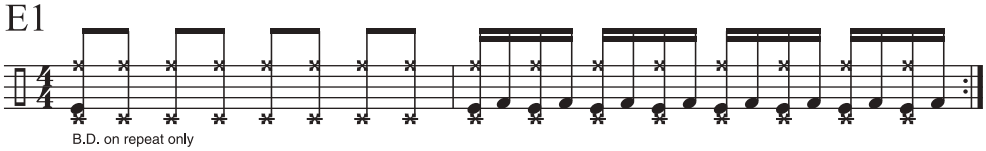

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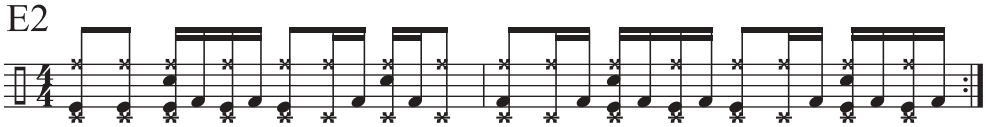

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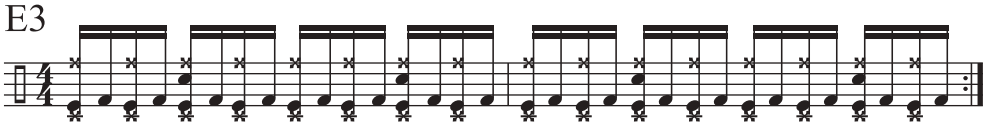
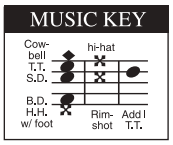


This article is excerpted from Daren's book *Advanced Pedal Applications: A Comprehensive Study Of Bridging And Multiple-Pedal Setups.* Used with permission. For more on Daren and *Advanced Pedal Applications,* go to www.darenpfeifer.com.

Essential Grooves

Part 6: Songo

by Tommy Igoe



There are five families into which all grooves fit—rock, funk, R&B/hip-hop, jazz, and world/specialty. Last month, we took a trip to Brazil to take a look at a few variations of samba. For the final installment of our series, we're heading to Cuba to learn one of the only true drumset grooves in the world family—the songo.

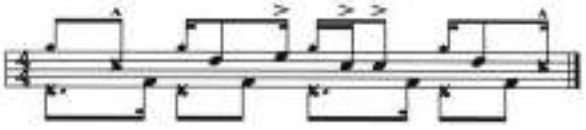
It's a cultural loss that there's such a tumultuous political environment in Cuba. Artists, as usual, suffer greatly in these types of situations, where they're robbed of a larger global audience and have a limited range of influences to feed their muse. Thankfully, art perseveres despite such obstacles, and the music of legendary Cuban group Los Van Van is a fine example.

Their drummer for over twenty-five years was Jose Luis Quintana, who's better known as "Changuito." Changuito is largely credited with inventing the songo. Because this groove was written specifically for drumset, we no longer have to imitate various percussion parts.

If you haven't played a songo before, be ready to have a blast. It has a lot of tom activity and a syncopated bass drum pattern, while the cowbell plays straight downbeats to hold it all together. The coordination can be tricky at first, so take it easy. Can't play it today? So what? If you need to, slow down the beat and isolate the parts between the limbs. Try to add a little more tomorrow. The entire beat will come together if you stay patient and focused. If you can already play a songo, pick up a few recordings of Los Van Van or other groups and listen to how authentic Cuban bands interpret this groove.

Main Groove

Here's what a songo looks like on paper.



As with almost all Afro-Cuban rhythms, there are many opinions regarding what's considered the "right" way to play songo. Don't get too hung up on that. Ultimately it's the music that decides what's correct. The above version works fine, and it can be modified to fit any situation where a songo is needed.

There's a dark side to this fantastic groove, however. Believe it or not, the songo is not going to be the right thing to play on *every* Latin-sounding tune. Even though it's written specifically for the drumset and it's fun to play, you shouldn't start haphazardly "songo-ing" all over the place. If you're playing a piece of music that has a mambo feel, don't play a songo—play a mambo!

The great percussionist Rolando Morales-Matos hipped me to this "over-songo-ization" one day when he said, "Man, some drumset players think a songo works on everything!" So be careful, and decide your grooves wisely.

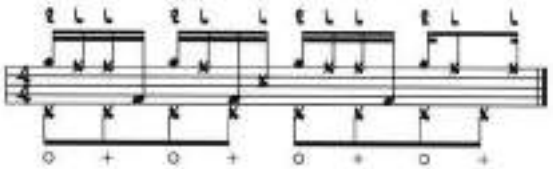
Variation A

Here's our first variation.

We drummers love to splash our hi-hats, don't we? Variation A also has a slightly simplified left-hand part, and it introduces a buzz stroke. Buzz strokes can be very effective on grooves like this. You can also play the hi-hat on the upbeats (the "&s") to bring a slightly different feel to your songo.

Variation B

The sticking shown in Variation B is no different from the one for Variation A. However, this time the left hand is playing on a closed hi-hat, and the left foot is splashing open/closed 8th notes. This left-foot pattern can be either a great addition to your groove or a horrible distraction, depending on how accurately it's played.



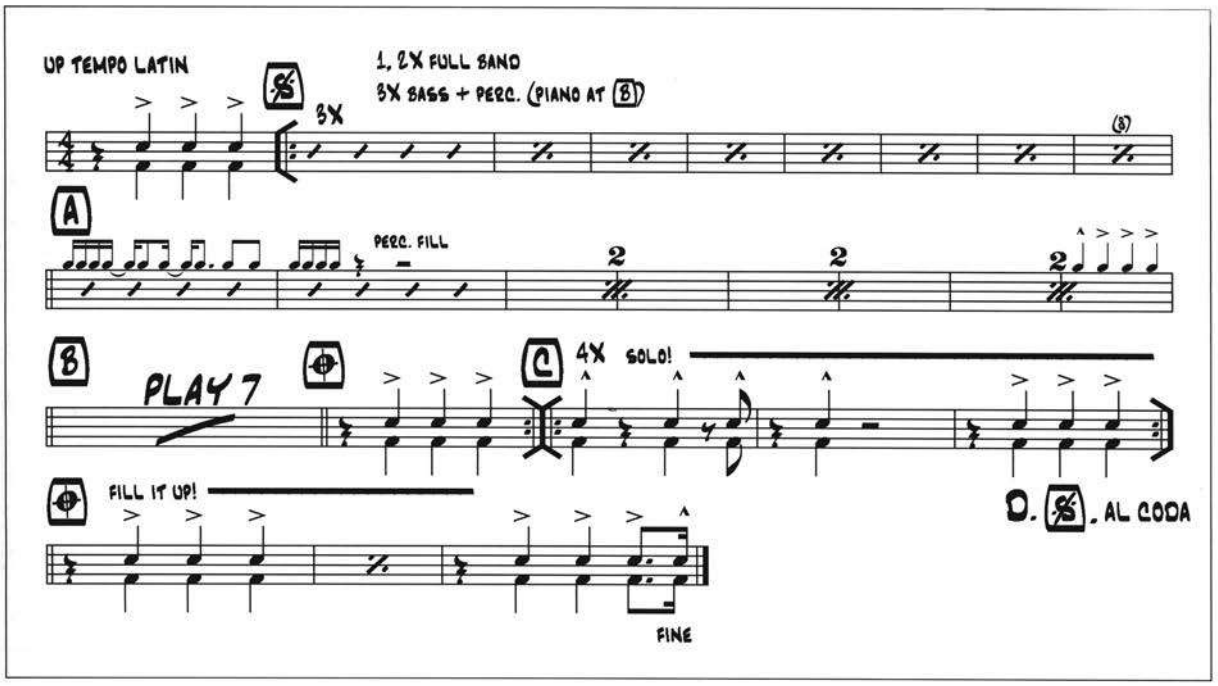
What's the secret to pulling off this variation? Control. If the left-foot hi-hat part is played with clarity and balance, and all of the open hats are exact 8th notes, you'll sound like a million bucks. On the other hand, if you're stomping around like a two-year-old after a day at an ice cream factory, things won't be quite as musically satisfying.

Now check out our final chart on the next page.

Chart

Of all the charts we've explored, this one is the most complex and challenging. Here's a quick rundown: The first section repeats three times. Letter A contains "cue" figures, which means the composer is leaving it up to you to decide what to do with them. Letter C is a solo for the drums, which repeats a three-bar figure four times. Then you D.S. (repeat back) to measure 2 and play up to the coda sign that's one bar before letter C. From there, you jump immediately to the bottom coda sign and play the final three measures. (Whew—I'm tired already!)

As always, you can't get an accurate idea of your proficiency in real-time, so recording yourself is essential. And remember, each of the charts that we've explored over the past six months is

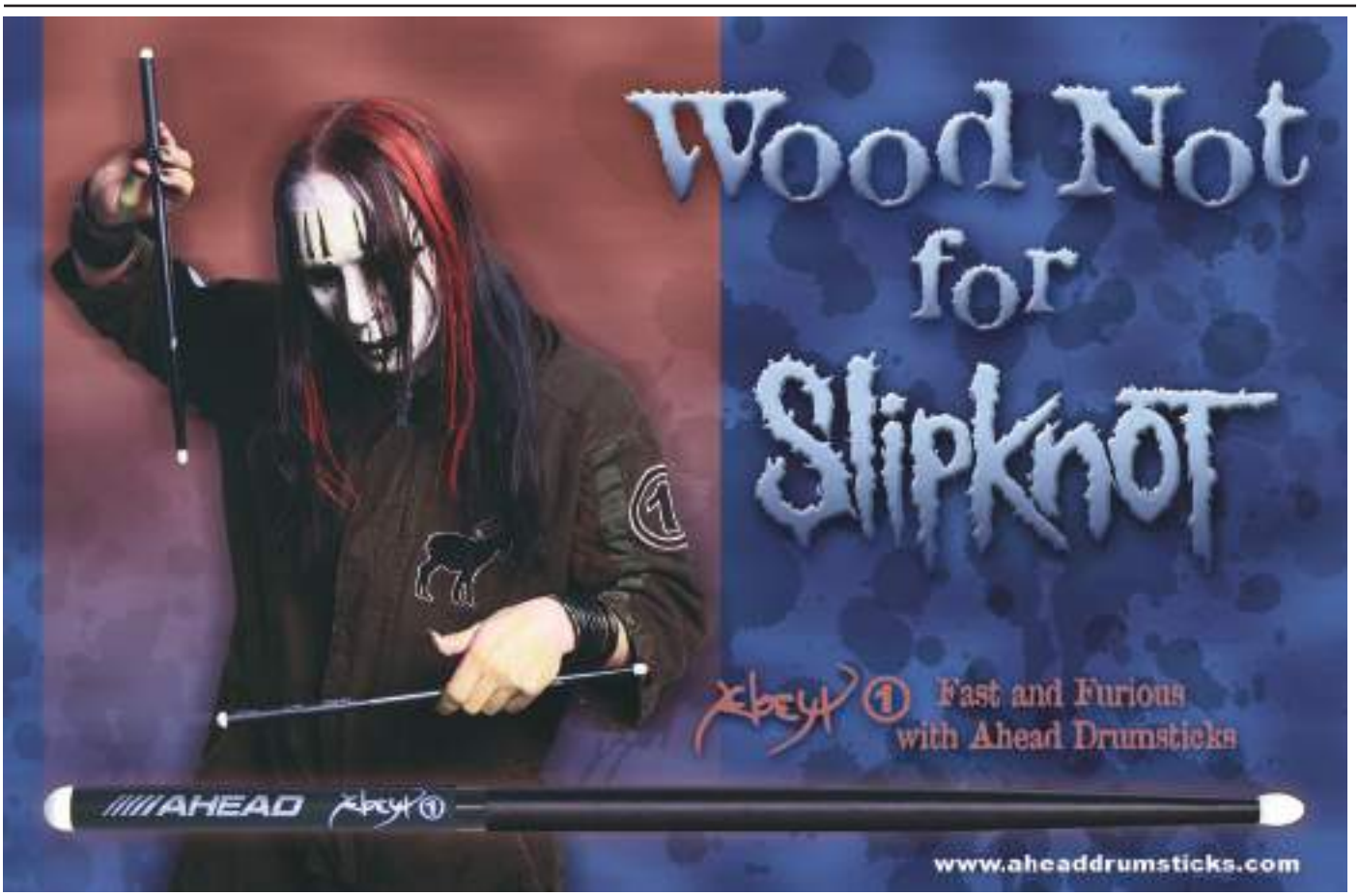


designed so that you *fail* the first time through. What good is it to be able to play something perfectly right away? So when things fall apart, think about what went wrong and try to fix it. Then hit it again, and again, and again….

It's been an honor to share with you some of the bedrock concepts of my teaching philosophy. For those playing for fun or who are ready to try these grooves in real bands, the same advice applies: Music isn't a race. Take your time, and enjoy the journey.

Tommy Igoe is the creator of the Groove Essentials series of products, published by Hudson Music. He's also the principal drummer and assistant conductor for Broadway's *The Lion King*, and he's the leader of the Friday Night Big Band at NYC jazz club Birdland.

To download the mp3 for this lesson, log on to MODERNDRUMMER.com

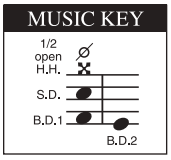


Blast Beats

The Advent Of The Extreme

by Myles Nestok

Speed-metal drumming. Some consider it an art. Others say it's nothing but excessive crash cymbal use. However, because of the success of competitions like The World's Fastest Drummer, practitioners of blast beats and 32nd-note flourishes are now being recognized for their ability to take drumming to extreme levels of speed and endurance. But what do you do once you can hit a bass drum 1,030 times in a minute, like WFD champion Tim Waterson? Join a heavy metal band!



Metal music is the most obvious context for manic rhythms. These days, metal drumming puts a lot of emphasis on speed. Even popular metal bands like Slipknot and In Flames showcase steady double bass 16ths and fast fills. But for the *really* fast stuff, you need to look beyond what's being played on MTV.

Drummers of underground metal are taking speed drumming to new heights, sixty-four notes at a time. The blast beat, which saw its first incarnations at the start of the death metal movement in the early '90s, has become increasingly popular these days. Drummers like Pete Sandoval of Morbid Angel found that playing simultaneous 16ths on bass drum, hi-hat, and snare created a powerful and schizophrenic-sounding rhythm that was a perfect match for his band's grunting frontman and down-tuned guitar.

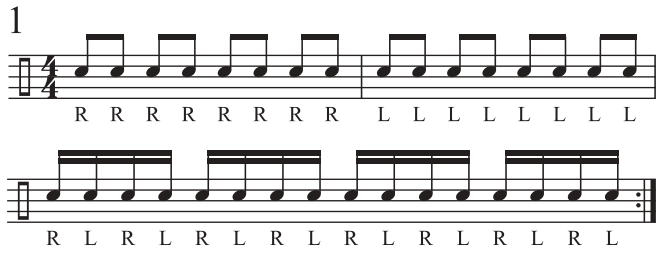
The current speed scene has been taken even further by modern death metal drummers (though greats like Sandoval continue to get faster with time). Former Hate Eternal drummer Derek Roddy is considered a deity among blast-beaters. And Adam Jarvis, who came to underground fame in Dying Fetus and now plays in Misery Index, plays so fast that many people think that his bands are using a drum machine.

Before Take-Off

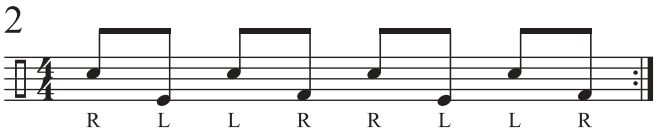
So I know you're thinking, "Where do I start in order to achieve such unbelievable speeds?" Begin with beats that you already love to play, but play them faster. Gradually speed up the rhythm, while remaining comfortable with every note. Eventually you'll get to a point where you feel like you're on the verge of breaking down. With time, you'll learn to befriend and conquer this feeling. Do this with each of your favorite beats. Once you start to hear comments that you sound like a tape player on fast-forward, you're almost there.

Another way to push your level of speed and control is with the following warm-up/practice exercises. This first one is great for the hands and feet. It consists of eight strokes with the right hand (or foot), eight strokes with the left hand (or foot), and a measure of single-stroke roll. Start slowly, and gradually speed it up until you're on the verge of rhythmic collapse but can still play each note accurately.

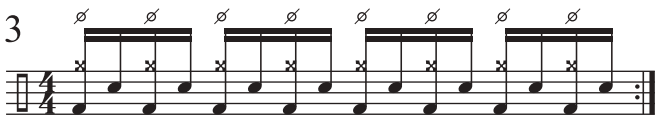
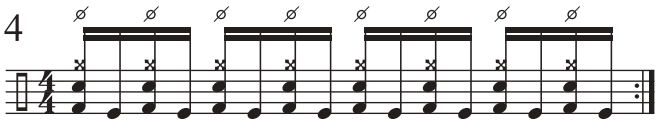
1

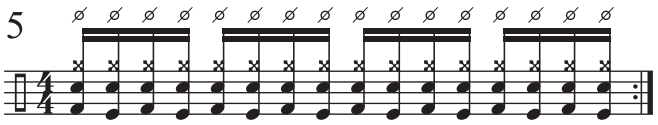


Another good exercise is to alternate between each limb as follows: right hand, left foot, left hand, right foot. This one helps build accuracy and coordination.

2

Blast Beat Basics

Now we're ready for our first blast beat. The simplest one consists of alternating between a unison bass/hi-hat stroke and a snare hit. As always, start slowly and gradually increase the tempo. This beat sounds sort of like a speedy polka: brash and brutal, yet strangely danceable. It's one of the easiest to master.

3

This next example is a beat often used by Cannibal Corpse drummer Paul Mazurkiewicz. It consists of straight 16ths on the bass drums with the hi-hat and snare playing 8th notes. This blast beat is a great way to accent a thrashy 8th-note guitar part.

Now it's time for the ultimate blast beat—simultaneous 16th notes on bass drums, hi-hat, and snare. This one is incredibly difficult to manage at a fast tempo.



Most drummers have trouble playing these beats because they hit the drums too hard. There's no reason to beat the tar out of the skins. When playing live, the drums are usually miked anyway. So if you're playing one of these beats and your stick is about to rip through your snare head, back off a little bit. And stay relaxed. It's harder to play when you're tense, and if you're not careful you'll end up with a debilitating wrist problem like carpal tunnel syndrome. Also, watch your sticks as you play. If you want to keep a machine-gun blast beat going for any length of time, you'll need to keep the sticks about two inches from the drumhead.

And there you have it. You're now equipped with the basic knowledge and skills to survive in today's über-fast drumming world. Good luck, and I'll see you at the next WFD event!

Who Took The Roll Out Of Rock?

Putting The Swing Back

by Mike DeSimone

Hey...remember "rock 'n' roll"? Although the term is still part of our everyday lexicon, its original meaning has long fallen by the wayside. Rock 'n' roll has morphed into "rock," "hard rock," "prog rock," and a dozen other sub-genre labels. The "roll" that's been lost is the swing element in the music. The main complaint that I've heard about some of today's drummers is that they couldn't swing if their life depended on it.

What makes this more unfortunate is that the complaint comes from musical directors of oldies- and classic-rock artists who truly appreciate—and pay for—drummers who can swing. I know this for a fact, because I've made a very good living from backing rock 'n' roll acts from the 1950s and '60s. There is also work to be found in "jump" and "swing" bands, blues bands, and local oldies groups.

Don't Be Too Vertical

The problem is that fewer and fewer drummers have the skills necessary to play rock 'n' roll authentically. Drummers who've been raised on the almighty 8th note have a tendency to play in a straight up-and-down manner that makes the groove overly heavy and tight. This is becoming more and more prevalent as younger players who are far removed from the early rock 'n' roll generation begin teaching.

Knowledge of traditional swing and shuffle rhythms will have a positive effect on the other rock rhythms that you play. The beauty of swing is that it teaches space and breadth. When that concept is incorporated into your rock playing, straight 8ths and 16ths will have a looser feel—which is essential to a good groove.

Could Jeff Porcaro have pulled off the "Rosanna" groove if he didn't have a knowledge of swing tradition?

The pages of this magazine have been filled with comments of many great rock drummers who have stated the importance of learning the swing feel. Every drummer I know has mentioned Jeff Porcaro's classic groove on Toto's "Rosanna." Do you think that Jeff could have pulled off that groove if he didn't have a knowledge of swing tradition?

Get Your Groove On

The ability to swing isn't confined to the rock 'n' roll tradition. It's absolutely essential if you're going to play any kind of R&B or funk. James Brown, Motown, and the Memphis/Stax sound are just a few examples. This year's *MD* Readers Poll winner in the Traditional R&B category was Steve Jordan, who has drummed for and produced many major artists. Steve is a fanatic about authenticity, and that fanaticism has been a major element of his success.

In an April '89 *MD* cover story, Steve mentioned how today's musicians often play Chuck Berry's classic hits incorrectly. All of Berry's original recordings have a swing feel. His classic "Johnny B. Goode" features the guitars playing 8th notes and the rest of the rhythm section playing a swing groove. This merging of straight and rounded rhythms has come to be known as a "swamp" feel. The 8th notes give the music a driving forward motion, while the swing beat settles the groove in the pocket and provides the dance element.

Standing In The Shadow Of Motown is a documentary about The Funk Brothers, the legendary studio band that played on all the great Motown hits. The film is not only a history of those extraordinary musicians, it's also a study of how the jazz tradition affected them and the recordings they made. The film is available on DVD, and I highly recommend it.

Diversify For Success

Young drummers today are extremely advanced when it comes to technique. But they're often married to one particular style, and thus are not very versatile. If you ask them what they want to do with their careers, most will say that they want to make it big with a top band, or that they want to become top studio players. But while it may be possible to become successful in a band by playing

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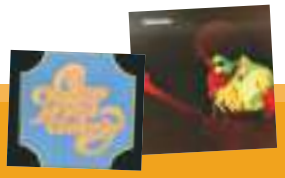
Seven Swingers



Here are seven great examples of how rock 'n' roll can—and should—swing.

"Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?"
Danny Seraphine Chicago, *Chicago Transit Authority*

"Who Knows?" **Buddy Miles** Jimi Hendrix, *Band Of Gypsys*

"Trouble No More"
Butch Trucks, Jai Johanny Johanson The Allman Brothers Band, *Eat A Peach*

"Fool In The Rain" **John Bonham** Led Zeppelin, *In Through The Out Door*

"If You Have To Ask" **Chad Smith** Red Hot Chili Peppers, *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*

"White Girl" **Yuval Gabay** Soul Coughing, *Irresistible Bliss*

"I Got A Woman" **Steve Jordan** John Mayer, *Try!*

only one style, studio drummers need to be *extremely* versatile in order to do their jobs. They also need a sense of musical history. Rock 'n' roll, as a genre, is over fifty years old, and there is a great deal of history to be learned. If you can't cop a good swing or rockabilly feel on a record date, you're going to have a difficult time trying to build a studio career.

Go To The Source

The best way to learn about the swing tradition in rock 'n' roll is to listen to recordings. There are many recorded compilations out there that cover rock 'n' roll, rockabilly, R&B, and the all-important New Orleans tradition. You should also dig out your old *Modern Drummer* issues and read about Earl Palmer, Hal Blaine, Al Jackson, D.J. Fontana, James Van Eaton, Jerry Allison, Gary Chester, and Panama Francis. These drummers are among the elite who graced many of the most enduring rock 'n' roll hits. It also wouldn't hurt to get some accessible jazz records so you can hear the swing tradition in its purest form. If you don't know what to get, you can't go wrong with *anything* by Count Basie.

Listen to the songs first, and then play along with them. As you practice, always aim for making the beat as buoyant as possible. Use a lateral motion on the hi-hat and the ride cymbal. (For more information on ride-cymbal playing, see my "Learning To Play Jazz" articles in the May and June 2000 issues of *MD*.)

The other thing you should aim for is an authoritative backbeat—*without* beating the hell out of your snare drum. Volume doesn't create a dominant backbeat, attitude does. Play the backbeat with your stick close to the snare drum, and pull the stick up immediately after you strike the drum. This will allow the drum to ring, and the result will be a rounded and more dominant backbeat.

Here's another tip: If you want to swing, stay away from anything that's too bottom-heavy. This goes especially for the shuffle. Don't play a quarter-note or "hard" shuffle, where you play the triplet feel in the bass drum instead of on the hi-hat or ride cymbal. Stay away, too, from stylized versions of swing or shuffle beats. A "stylist" is usually someone just skilled enough to put a piece of music over, but that's all. The term is often used to describe singers, and it's no compliment for a drummer to be tagged with it. Put the time in and really learn how to swing.

The swing tradition is deceptive in its simplicity. That is to say, a swing feel may be simple, but it's not easy to play well. But if you concentrate on that feel and make it jump, you'll have gone a long way toward putting the roll back into your rock.

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Phil Collins And The Drummers Of Tarzan

by Rick Van Horn

Playing drumset or percussion for a modern Broadway show calls for tremendous musical skill and versatility, along with the ability to reproduce a high-energy performance for eight shows a week. But drummer Gary Seligson and percussionists Roger Squitero and Javier Diaz had an even more daunting challenge to face when they were hired to play Disney's current stage production of *Tarzan* at the Richard Rogers Theater. The show's composer happens to be one of the world's most famous drummers: Phil Collins.

The Broadway *Tarzan* brings Disney's animated motion picture to life on stage. Phil augmented his songs from the movie—including the Academy Award–winning *You'll Be In My Heart*—with several totally new compositions. The score is heavily infused with a combination of African and contemporary pop percussion sounds, which keeps the show's percussion trio extremely busy.

Finding A Drummer

Gary Seligson's Broadway credits include the Elton John musical *Aida* and the smash hit *Wicked*. How did he come to be connected with *Tarzan*? "While I was still doing *Wicked* a couple of years ago," Gary replies, "I was approached by Jim Abbott, the musical director on *Tarzan*. Jim's a good friend of mine, and I've worked with him a lot. He asked if I'd be interested in working on a *Tarzan* workshop, and I said of course.

"Phil had created a demo with a lot of percussion on it," Gary continues. "But there was only going to be me and a couple of other musicians at the workshop. So I programmed a lot of Roland V-Drum stuff—adhering to the demo as much as possible—and hoped for the best. I met Phil on that first workshop, and he was kind enough not to trash me."

Phil himself chimes in, saying, "I've got to tell you a little story. That first workshop was held in a classroom environment, with a low ceiling and reflective windows. We had about fifty people, and we had to get a sense of the music without bashing them out of the room. So Gary played the V-Drums, with Jim Abbot and another player on keyboards. There wasn't even a bass player. It was a bit of a shock to hear the music played like that. I was listening and thinking, 'Oh, man, if this is what the sound is going to be like in the theater, then this music isn't going to work. It's meant to be rock. But if it can't be loud because you've got kids and elderly people....

"But that night," Phil continues, "I went to see *Wicked*, and it was a pivotal moment for me. The songs were fantastic, the performers were fantastic, the drummer was fantastic, and most important, the *sound* was fantastic. I came back to the workshop the next day and said, 'I saw a great show last night. The sound and the drums were really powerful, and that's what we've gotta go for.' When Gary said, 'Well, that was me,' suddenly a weight was off my shoulders. I realized that a Broadway show *could* sound like that. And not only that, we got the guy! It was a great moment for me."

At which Gary exclaims, "A great moment for *you*?!"

Adding Percussion

When *Tarzan* went into rehearsals, Gary became the rehearsal drummer. Next, veteran NYC percussionist Roger Squitero was added to the mix. "They were rehearsing the very opening of the show," says Roger, "and they wanted to get a feel for what they were going to hear from the hand drum side of things. I came in for two days prior to the start of full orchestra rehearsals. That was about a week before we moved into the theater."

Roger's musical background made him an excellent choice for a percussion spot on *Tarzan*. "I've been in New York for thirty years," he says, "mostly as a studio and touring musician. But the New York studio scene has evaporated. I saw the writing on the wall in the late '80s and early '90s as my session dates were drying up. A friend of mine wrote music for a 1994 show at Lincoln Center called *Chronicle Of A Death Foretold*, which I played on. It made me realize that there were some cool opportunities on Broadway. A few years ago I got called to do a show called *Brooklyn*, which I played for nine months. I honestly don't know how my name came up for *Tarzan*."

Gary Seligson does. "There's a short list of guys in New York who play really strong hand drums *and* do theater work," he says. "Roger's name is pretty much at the top of that list."

Tarzan's second percussionist, Javier Diaz, was born in Cuba, lived in Venezuela, and earned a masters in music at Juilliard. "My background is in classical music," he says, "paralleled with Afro-Cuban percussion. I lived in LA for a while, and I did some studio work out there, mainly for Spanish television. But at the same time, I was subbing with the LA Philharmonic.

The Tarzan percussion team, from left: Roger Squitero, Phil Collins, Javier Diaz, and Gary Seligson

"I come from a world where you rehearse for a tour, with everybody, for six weeks. On Broadway, you have the orchestra for two days."
—Phil Collins

When I came to New York, I played with the American Symphony, which is a freelance orchestra. Through that, I met some people who were working on Broadway. I subbed for *Lion King*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Brooklyn*, and some other shows. Subbing for Roger on *Brooklyn* led to the call to do *Tarzan*."

Roger Squitero adds, "We needed someone who could play classical percussion, mallet instruments, *and* hand drums, with a lot of feel and sound. If there's a short list of guys who do what I do, there's an even shorter list of guys who do what Javier does, to the extent that he does it."

A Band On Broadway

Because of *Tarzan*'s complicated technical elements, out-of-town tryouts weren't practical. So the show previewed in its present home at the Richard Rogers Theater. "Our first performance in front of an audience was March 24th," says Phil Collins, "but the show didn't officially open until May 10th. We'd do three or four shows, then break for three or four days to fix whatever we wanted to fix. Then another three or four shows, followed by another break. After about three weeks of that, the shows started outnumbering the rehearsal days, so we got some momentum going."

Phil admits that some Broadway production procedures took him a bit by surprise. "I come from a world where you rehearse for a tour, with everybody, for six weeks," he says. "On Broadway, you have the orchestra for two days. Of course, everybody's reading, and Broadway musicians are very skilled. But the music for *Tarzan* has got to be played like a band. Everybody's commitment to the project—everybody's participation every night—is important. I can't imagine Chester Thompson calling me up one night on tour and saying, 'I'm not coming in for the show tonight, I'm sending someone else.' The whole feel would change. It's the same thing here. We went out to dinner a few days before the opening to instill in everybody that this was a *band*, not just a faceless bunch of people playing charts. I got to know everybody. They were playing my music, which I've lived with for four and a half years."

The Creative Process

Phil Collins is a consummate musician and composer. Still, we drummers like to claim him as one of our own. Did Phil approach the creation of the Tarzan score from a rhythmic perspective? "Since I am a drummer first and foremost," says Phil, "things always start off with some sort of atmosphere on the drum front. Then I move to the keyboard pretty quickly. The *Tarzan* score definitely features segments that involve pretty heavy drums and percussion. But I tried to tell the story the way I felt it should be told. And sometimes that didn't involve drums at all."

When it came to preparing the drum parts, Phil went well beyond what a traditional Broadway composer might do. "Phil's demos were very extensive," says Gary Seligson. "He sent us breakdowns of the drums and percussion, with the music in the background, so we could figure out exactly what was going on."

Adds Phil, "Originally, we were only going to have one percussionist, plus Gary. As we were going through the audition process, I played along with whoever was playing. There was loads of percussion on the demos, and it became clear that we needed two guys, because I wouldn't be there every night. This was where I got another Broadway eye-opener. In my world, if I want another background singer, I hire one, and I just make less money. In the Broadway world, there are stipulated sizes for theater orchestras. If you want to hire someone, you have to fire someone else. There's a horn player somewhere who's not working because we hired three drummers."

Theater is a collaborative art and an evolving medium. How much input did each member of the *Tarzan* percussion section have into what became the final parts? Roger Squitero replies, "On the first day I came in, [orchestrator] Doug Besterman came up to me and said, 'A lot of your chart is just slashes or notes for an idea. Take that idea and bring what you bring to it.' I'd do that, and if it wasn't working, then Phil would come over and stick a knife in my back. [laughter] Actually, Phil would pull me aside and say, 'Check out what I programmed on the demos.' I'd listen to get the idea, and then I'd do my best to bring that to the bar. Beyond that, Javier and I would often try to come up with some intricate parts that would fit together. Then we'd concentrate on making those parts lock in with Gary's drumset. It was a collaboration between us all, including Phil."

Gary Seligson adds, "I've done several Broadway shows, and I've *never* seen a composer be as involved as Phil was in the creative process. I think the reason that there is so much vitality in this show is Phil's influence. He was there day in and day out, before the rest of the orchestra got there. It was fascinating to watch. [Musical director] Jim Abbott would be teaching

Javier Diaz

vocal parts to the ensemble, and Phil would listen and tap along on his chest, or drum on the piano with his hands, informing the musical director, the chorus, the principals, and *me* as to where he was coming from. To have that kind of input from the composer was extraordinary.

"I played for *Aida*," Gary continues. "When Elton John was there, it was very helpful. But, frankly, he was rarely there. So we worked with his demos, which just had piano, drum machine, and Elton's vocals. As a result, what wound up becoming *Aida* the Broadway musical was very far from Elton's original vision. Whereas on *Tarzan* we had a drummer extraordinaire out in the house, checking everything. He'd check the way the rimshots sounded; he'd listen to a part and say, 'Let's make it bongos instead of djembe.' It was such a gift."

In The Pit

Gary Seligson plays a traditional acoustic drumkit for *Tarzan*, augmented by a drumKAT, a djembe, a couple of shakers, a tambourine, and a rain stick. Roger Squitero's battery includes congas, a djembe, a talking drum, a jun-jun, timpani, shakers, a tambourine, a rain stick, triangles, bongos, and, as he puts it, "whatever else we can fit in there."

What does that leave for Javier Diaz? "I play everything that Roger is playing," he says, "plus a xylophone, a lot of timpani, bells, wood blocks, suspended cymbals, shakers, tamborim, tam-tams, and a bell tree. And we were lucky enough to find this beautiful old surdo that has a really great sound. It has become our 'papa drum.' It's the low jungle drum...an orchestral bass drum...and sometimes a surdo, too. And at rehearsals we can eat lunch on it."

With all the percussion instruments involved in playing *Tarzan*, there's as much choreography in the orchestra pit as there is on stage. Says Javier, "Roger and I have had to work out how to move in that space when I have to slide behind him and go to the congas, or when he's moving to the djembe."

"If you filmed us and then played it in fast motion," says Roger with a chuckle, "it would be a really interesting little dance."

Is It Live, Or Is It...?

The drums and percussion on *Tarzan* create a deep, rich, and rhythmically complex ensemble sound. *So* complex, in fact, that it begs the question of how only three players can create it.

"There's some programming," says Phil Collins. "But I mean that in the sense that someone is playing a programmed drum to get a layered sound. Everything you hear in the theater is played live, except for a couple of drum loops that I made. One is for the very beginning of the show. We were starting from zero, sound-wise, and we just wanted to have a known point of reference. So I came up with a loop like I would have done if I'd been making a record. The drummers play along with it—as does the rest of the orchestra. It comes back at the end of the show for the bows.

Roger Squitero

"There is also a loop behind an involved dance sequence on a tune called 'Jungle Funk,'" Phil continues. "Again, everybody's playing the same parts that are on the loop. It's there as a cushion, mostly for the benefit of the sound engineer."

Adds Gary Seligson, "As far as we're concerned, there's another benefit to having those loops. They give us the chance to play with Phil Collins at every performance, which is fabulous."

Gary Seligson

Family Matters

Executing the layered percussion that gives *Tarzan* so much of its musical character and intensity calls for close interaction between the three players. That's a bit of a challenge, considering that Gary is isolated in a drum booth, while Roger and Javier are often faced away from Gary when playing specific instruments.

Roger comments, "It *was* tough in the early days of the show. But now, Javier and I are both 'off book.' We don't need to turn pages any more, so we've moved our music stands away from us. That's opened up a sightline between Gary and us. We're kind of thrilled to be able to look at each other now."

Phil Collins adds, "Being able to see and relate to one another definitely is a part of that 'band' thing I mentioned earlier. We're luckier in that regard than some shows. I've heard horror stories of musicians being in completely separate rooms. Here, everybody is in the pit. And I think that's good. I always come down and visit when I see the show—which I do about three times a week—because this band is like a big family to me. And also, this is the first time I've ever done a show like this. It's like your first girlfriend, or first movie, or first record. I want to make sure it stays as good as it can be."

Gary Seligson concludes, "Every musician in the *Tarzan* band is an extremely professional and seasoned player. But the fact that Phil has been so involved and so warm with everyone in this orchestra makes each person want to give 110% instead of 100%. It's like having a great general on the battlefield. You want to give this guy everything you've got."

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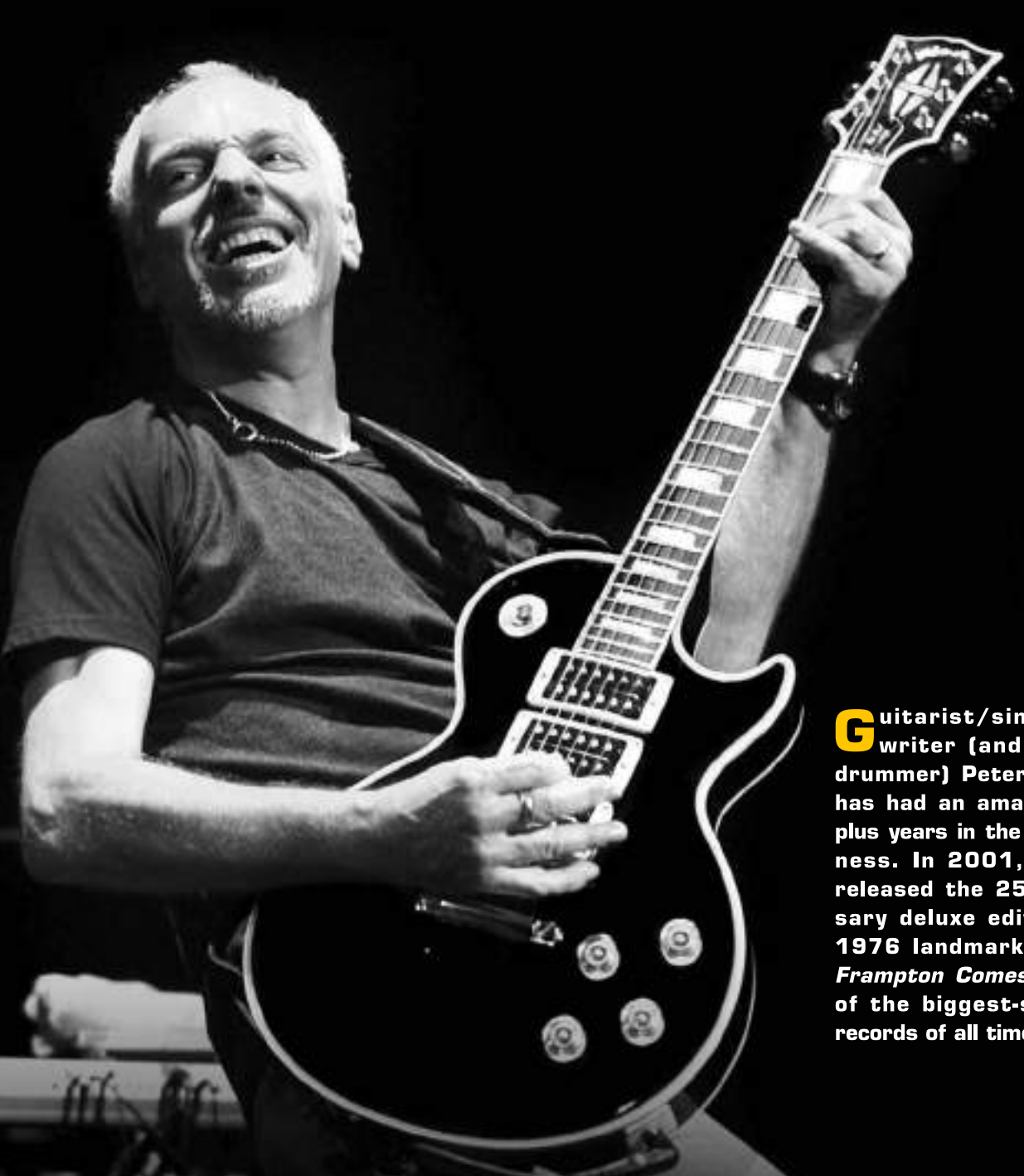
Peter Frampton

Guitar Great Talks Drummers

by Billy Amendola



Guitarist/singer/songwriter (and sometime drummer) Peter Frampton has had an amazing thirty-plus years in the music business. In 2001, Universal released the 25th-anniversary deluxe edition of his 1976 landmark recording *Frampton Comes Alive*, one of the biggest-selling live records of all time.

"I'm not much on technique. A nice Motown whack-dack-a-boom is killer. And it always fits."

Frampton was born on April 22, 1950, and started playing guitar at age eight. In 1966 he had his first taste of success with his band The Herd. In 1969 he formed a heavier band called Humble Pie, featuring Small Faces vocalist Steve Marriott. By 1971 Frampton had gained valuable studio experience, including performances on George Harrison's masterpiece, *All Things Must Pass*, Harry Nilsson's *Son Of Schmilsson*, and other important recordings. He briefly formed a new band called Frampton's Camel, and then began a proper career as a solo artist.

In 1976, the mega-hit recording *Frampton Comes Alive* brought Peter huge success. The double album stayed on the charts for more than ten weeks, sold over sixteen million copies, and launched three hit singles: The number-one "Baby, I Love Your Way" and the top-tenners "Do You Feel Like I Do" and "Show Me The Way." Two years later Frampton hit the number-two spot with "I'm In You," from the album of the same name.

Since then, Frampton has guested as a guitarist on more records then we can list here. In 1989 he returned to the stage to tour with David Bowie, and in 2000 he filmed his first concert DVD, *Live In Detroit*.

As this article goes to press in September of 2006, Frampton is about to release the instrumental album *Fingerprints*, which blends popular jazz, blues, and classics, and features a stellar cast of players. "Every track has been a wonderful challenge, pushing me to raise my own bar again," says Peter, excitedly. *MD* spoke to Frampton as he was preparing for his upcoming tour.

MD: Percussionist Daniel de los Reyes has been raving about your new record. And when your current drummer, Shawn Fichter, recently called to say hello, *he* was raving about it. Let's talk a bit about it.

Peter: This has been the CD I've been waiting all my life to make. I have Charlie Watts, Bill Wyman, and Chris Stainton all on one track. That was one of the first tracks we did in England. Another of the early sessions yielded two tracks with Matt Cameron and Mike McCready of Pearl Jam. We did a remake of "Black Hole Sun," as well as one that we wrote, "Blowin' Smoke."

MD: How was working with Matt?

Peter: Matt is an incredible, passionate player. Certain drummers are orchestrators, and he's one. It's amazing that I get to play with drummers who have technique, musicality, *and* the wisdom to know when to use it. That is basically the secret. If the drummer plays the song, he *plays* the song, he doesn't just fill it up with all him. It's all about grooving. Even if it's a high-tech piece, it's mainly down to what you leave out. That's always been the thing for me. Even if it's a really involved piece, it's still got to *feel* great.

MD: Speaking of great feels, how was it working with Charlie?

Peter: Fantastic! I've jammed with him before over the years, but this was the first time getting him on a record. It was a lot of fun.

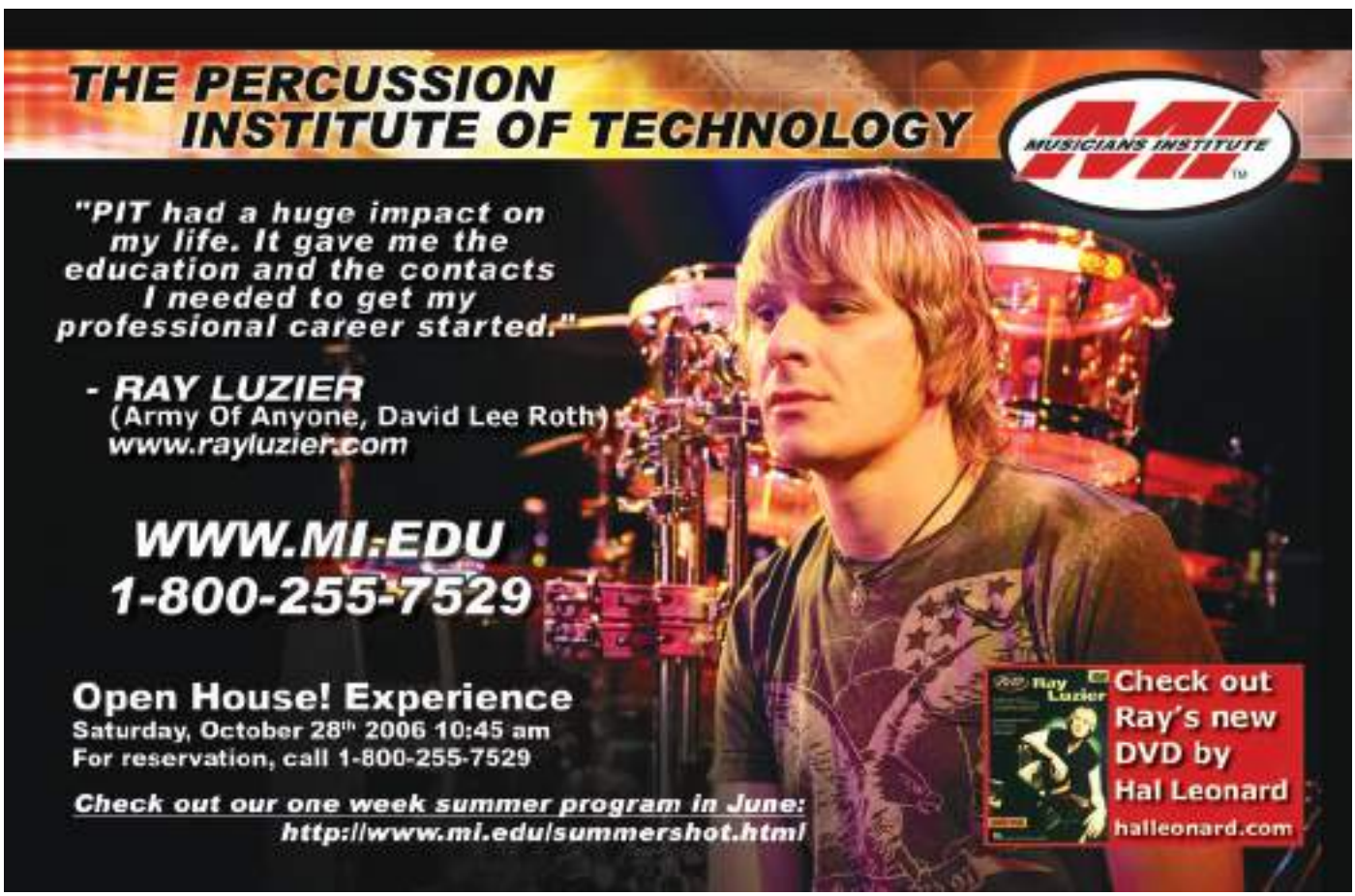
Charlie is Charlie. He wrote the book on how to play Charlie. [laughs] And everybody from jazz to pop to rock has all done that missed hi-hat beat.

MD: Did he do it on his track?

Peter: Yes, and it was wonderful. [laughs]

MD: You played drums on some of your earlier albums. For example, the Stevie Wonder tune "I Believe When I Fall In Love" from *Frampton's Camel* features you, doesn't it?

Peter: Yes. I played double drums with John Siomos. I was in one studio and John was in the other. I don't play so much now, though I used to enjoy it a lot. But I got to play with so many incredible drummers, I couldn't keep that stamina up.



Peter Frampton

MD: How did you get into drumming?

Peter: I had a five-string banjo that ended up with the strings off. Of course it had skin across the round part. So I bought a pair of sticks, and I started banging on the banjo. That was my snare drum, and the sofa was the kick drum.

MD: How old were you?

Peter: A bit after I started playing guitar—twelve, thirteen, something like that. I never really was that good. But when I started playing with Steve Marriot and Jerry Shirley in Humble Pie, I started playing a little on Jerry's drums. Then I got a drumkit of my own, and I was into it. I wanted to know what was difficult and what drums could do. I really enjoyed playing. The Motown feel is my very favorite, so I would practice to Motown records. I can play a good groove, but you've got to play all the time to keep up your skills. I used to play a little bit every night on stage in the '70s. I used to just kick John off his kit. I'd sit down and he'd get up, and then *he*'d sit down and *I'd* get up—just enough to go crazy. But eventually I realized that I was, and always will be, a novice drummer. Most guitarists like to think they can play drums. But I know better. [laughs] I was really a guitar player, so why not just concentrate on that?

MD: You've worked with quite an impressive list of drummers. I'll toss out a few names, and you tell us what you like about their playing.

Peter: Let's start with the late John Siomos. I knew very little about John when I first met him. I didn't realize he had played with Mitch Ryder, and that he'd been to Motown and been invited to play on a track or two. Right before he was with me, he was with Todd Rundgren on "Hello It's Me." That's a great song in general, but I love listening to it just for John's playing. He was a perceptive and incredibly inventive drummer. Very, very light touch...but the *feel*.... I could always dance to John's drums—and I'm not a good dancer, so I need some good drumming. [laughs]

MD: Jerry Shirley from Humble Pie.

Peter: Jerry came from a band called The Apostolic Convention. Steve Marriot was helping me form a band at the time, before it was going to be Humble Pie. He said, "You've got to come see this kid." Jerry has a lot of verve and vigor, like the lion from *The Wizard Of Oz*. He had a lot of spirit, and he was also a huge fan of Kenney Jones from The Small Faces, who we all loved. He actually subbed a couple times for The Faces. When I saw him, I said, "Yeah, I love his playing." It was straight-ahead rock. He was always very inventive for Humble Pie, so that was great.

MD: John "J.R." Robinson.

Peter: Oh, my god. J.R. makes anything sound good. And he'll *definitely* make you dance. What a phenomenal drummer. J.R. has just got the killer groove. He leads the band, which is what a drummer should do.

MD: Jeff Porcaro.

Peter: Jeff was such a wonderful guy, as well as an incredible drummer. And again, he had the groove—the amazing groove. When you talk about knowing what to leave out, Jeff definitely did. When he played a fill, it was a momentous occasion. And they were *great* fills. But the groove was all-important with him. It was always a joy to play with Jeff. He was a powerhouse—and an original. He created such a

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vibe, even before he sat down. He was always happy, and he really enjoyed playing. I'm so glad that we got to enjoy that time together.

MD: Omar Hakim, who played on *Premonition*.

Peter: We had Omar Hakim and Steve Ferrone, in the same week, on one album! Omar is a wonderful guy as well. He has the chops and decides when and how he's going to use them, and he's got this wonderful feel. And then Steve Ferrone...you have to hold a gun to his head before he'll do a fill. [laughs] But again, when he does do one, it's incredible.

MD: Shawn Pelton.

Peter: The story with Shawn was, I couldn't get to a rehearsal for a TV show that we were filming for VH1. But the band had rehearsed with him the day before. So I came in the morning of the show and ran through the songs quickly. Playing with Shawn was amazing. And that morning was the first time I ever met him.

Again, the drummers I admire have a fundamental link: They all have incredible feel. I'm never that much on technique. A nice Motown whack-dack-a-boom is killer. And it always fits.

MD: How did you meet your current drummer, Shawn Fichter?

Peter: My staple diet of favorite drummers right now consists of Chad Cromwell and Shawn Fitcher, and they both just played incredibly on this new record. I met Shawn at a time when Chad wasn't able to come out with us. He was out with Mark Knopfler, who he worked with way before me. So for one of those occasions we decided to listen to some people in Nashville. Shawn was one of them—and what a find!

MD: Since you mentioned Chad Cromwell, what do you particularly like about his drumming?

Peter: Chad, he's got the feel...*my* feel. None of the people we've been mentioning lack for feel. But Chad has been in the band so long. I'm sure he'll always play on a cut or two of my records.

MD: Harry Stinson.

Peter: Harry was someone that Mark Goldenberg, who is playing guitar with me, knew. He's another great Nashville drummer. Harry did *The Art Of Control* with me.

MD: Denny Fongheiser.

Peter: Denny's a fantastic rock drummer. He played on the *Peter Frampton* record, and he played on the original of "Off The Hook," the instrumental, and did a phenomenal job.

Jamie Oldaker is another guy I should mention. Jamie was the first guy that we liked after John Siomos left. In fact, he was actually the *only* guy we liked. [laughs] There was a big pair of shoes to fill.

MD: How about your friend Ringo? The two of you go back to George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass* and a Harry Nilsson record. And Ringo was on your first solo record, correct?

Peter: That's right, in 1972. I got to play with him for the first time on a record date I did with George producing, which was an album for Doris Troy. Barry Morgan was on drums for the first session. Then came the next session, and I looked around and...oh my god, there was Ringo! I got to know him when I was like twenty, and we've been friends ever since. So it was great to ask him to be on my first record.

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Later, he had me play on *his* solo records, which was a lot of fun. And I was part of his All-Starr tour of America and Europe in the late '90s. He always puts together a fun show.

MD: And talk about feel....

Peter: Well, there's the fact that it sounds like you're playing with The Beatles. It's got *that* feel. Ringo's got that style that is inimitably his, including those classic tom fills.

MD: Are there any drummers you've never worked with that you would like to?

Peter: Well there's only one, but, sadly, he's no longer with us. That's John Bonham. John Siomos absolutely idolized Bonham. Even though his feel and touch were totally different from Bonham's, he had the same kind of thing going on in the way that he thought.

I recently got to play with The Allman Brothers Band, including their drummers Jaimoe and Butch Trucks, and their percussionist, Marc Quiñones. That blew my mind. They are all so good together, my jaw was on my chest. The whole band is great, but the two drummers.... There's something special about that, when it's two people playing with one mind, never getting in the way of each other, always complementing each other. One starts a fill, the other finishes it. It's the little things that they probably have never spoken about to this day, that they don't even know they do.

MD: Jim Keltner says the same thing about playing double drums with Ringo. They don't really talk about it; it just falls into place.

Peter: Keltner is such a sweet person. He always has a smile for you. He gave a very touching speech when Jeff Porcaro passed. Wonderful man.

MD: Have you ever played with Jim?

Peter: Only to jam.

MD: You programmed some drums on a few of your records.

Peter: Yeah, I did a little drum programming. I'm so glad that that's nowhere to be found anymore. [laughs] It was so time-consuming. Nowadays, I love loops, because you can get a loop happening so much quicker than writing a drumbeat, and it's so much cooler. And you might not even use it in the end.

MD: Do you still prefer to record drums in analog format?

Peter: Yes. When Studer announced that they were going to stop making the 827 24-track 2" tape machine, I immediately bought one. The backing tracks are all recorded analog. As soon as we fill that one up we bang it off to Nuendo and then it's in the digital 96K 24-bit. There's *nothing* like it.

MD: What are some of the things a drummer might do that would turn you off right away?

Peter: Not play the part. I'll give you a little insight: Drummers who think they're really good don't learn the part, because they think their feel is good enough to get them the job. The other extreme is the people who maybe don't have quite the feel you want, but they've got the part down. I find that a lot. But I understand. When you're a stylist, who wants to play like somebody else? With the drums it's pretty important that you have the original part laid down, otherwise it's not going to feel the same. Then I usually give a drummer five or six numbers to learn, to see if they bring anything new to those numbers. But underneath there's still got to be that feel. That's what I'm *always* looking for.

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Frank Katz
A True Original

Interviewed by Mike Clark

story by Linda Reynolds • photos by Paul La Raia

Mike Clark's drumming on Herbie Hancock's Headhunters' album *Thrust* earned him an international reputation as a true innovator on the instrument. Mike's deft touch in a multitude of genres—straight-ahead jazz, funk, and with a jam band or his organ trio—continues to astound audiences around the world.

Frank Katz is another genius of the instrument. Among others, he's recorded, toured, and performed with Brand X, James Blood Ulmer, Dave Douglas, Chris Wood, Adam Rogers, and Dave Fiuczynski. A fiercely original and influential talent, he's one of the top teachers at Drummers Collective in New York, where his students have included Keith Carlock (Sting, Steely Dan), Anton Fig (*The David Letterman Show*), and Sterling Campbell (David Bowie, Duran Duran).

Katz and Clark are both alumni of the acclaimed British fusion group Brand X, a band that was co-founded by drummer Phil Collins and bassist Percy Jones. Brand X is noteworthy for its roster of past stellar drummers, which, besides Collins, Clark, and Katz, includes Kenwood Dennard and Chuck Burgi.

Recently Mike sat down in his apartment on Manhattan's Upper East Side to interview Frank, his good friend and colleague, about his new book, *Contemporary Drumset Phrasing*. The book has been released concurrently with Mike's own *Funk Drumming: Innovative Grooves And Advanced Concepts*. Both are published by Hal Leonard.

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Mike: We just listened to a cut off the CD that comes with your new book. That was a hell of a solo. Who are your influences?

Frank: Definitely Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Kenwood Dennard, Lenny White, Philly Joe Jones, Jack DeJohnette, Kenny Clarke, Billy Cobham, Steve Gadd, Roy Haynes, Papa Jo Jones, and *you*, to name a few.

Mike: I hear a lot of rolls that sound to me like singles, but they have a deeper, thicker texture, like paradiddles or doubles. They sound seamless. Can you talk a little about what's happening with your hands?

Frank: After hearing some of my solos, people often come up to me and ask, "Is that paradiddles—or doubles?" And it's kind of an oversimplification of the kind of phrasing that I play. I try to break things up, like a saxophone player or a piano player would. It's a whole lot of different things combined, but the sticking patterns are derived from paradiddles, doubles, and singles.

Mike: Throw in some accents and you've got a brew.

Frank: Exactly. I usually use more double and paradiddle type of stickings than singles; there are also a lot of triplets, plus some 16ths and 32nd notes. Basically they're just stickings that I came up with, a lot of linear patterns. My dad [jazz pianist Dick Katz] used to talk about how Charlie Parker would play all those fast notes, but if you took those phrases that he played and slowed them down, they were melodies that made perfect sense. That's what I'm trying to do, to come up with phrases that are alive.

Mike: Are these stickings and combinations polyrhythmic?

Frank: Some of them are cross-rhythms, like fives, sevens, and nines. I don't get too deep into the polyrhythmic thing like Kenwood, with four different time signatures happening at once.

Mike: You also have some flam action, à la Tony, with the hands and feet all broken up into different patterns.

Frank: Yeah. I used to go see him play at the Vanguard. I loved the way he would play flams. It was so musical.

Mike: You're always able to technically pull out what you're hearing without even thinking about it.

Frank: That's what I'm striving for. I always tell my students that to get in touch with their creativity, they should not only take time to play out of the book, but to also just *play*, to improvise, as if they're playing at Carnegie Hall.

Mike: Let's talk about the beats in the book. You seem to be starting with the really basic stuff and then moving forward into more 16th-note patterns, different ways of moving the hands, different accents, and different places to open the hi-hat.

Frank: I start out with a whole section of simple grooves and popular hand moves and dynamics, and then move on to the more complex stuff. The first half of the book is basically groove-oriented; some funk, some fusion grooves, a little bit of Latin. There's a whole jazz section, and there's some Caribbean-oriented grooves. The second half of the book is all of the solo stuff.

Mike: Let's go back to the tune "Prisoners Of The Knitting Factory Hallway." The beat is really solid. Are you playing with a click here?

Frank: No, that tune was recorded live. Most of them were. But on the tunes recorded with sequences, meaning pre-recorded tracks that are computer-generated, we used click tracks.

Mike: In the funk and fusion grooves section, I see lots of 16th notes and varied accents. The right hand is on the hi-hat, but you cross the left hand under the right to play the hi-hat as well.

Frank: I call that the "left-hand cross-under technique."

Mike: There's some tricky stuff going on here. Are you turning the time around on purpose?

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Being Frank

Here are a few of Katz' finest recordings:

Artist	Album
Brand X	Xcommunication
Brand X	Manifest Destiny
Brand X	Trilogy (also featuring Phil Collins)
Brand X	Timeline
Percy Jones	Tunnels

Frank: Definitely.

Mike: Would you call these beats linear?

Frank: Not exactly linear. Technically, there are no unisons in linear beats. I'd call these quasi-linear beats because there are some unisons, although they are in a linear style. These are beats based on some of your innovations. You, and a handful of other guys, like Tony Williams, Lenny White, Dave Garibaldi, revolutionized breaking things up in a completely different way.

Mike: Are you hitting in the center of the drum, or are you hitting rimshots?

Frank: It's a rimshot, but the stick is in the center. I try to get the most sound out of the least amount of motion. I'm not bringing the stick way up.

Mike: Whenever I hear you live in New York it always blows my mind. Your ideas and grooves are so original. Nobody else plays like that!

Frank: Thanks.

Mike: You have incredible chops that seem to come out of emotion versus technique. And your phrasing sounds rock-solid. You never seem stuck.

Frank: Well, yeah. I try not to get stuck, but we all, you know, have our bloopers.

Mike: You just played me two tracks off the CD, tracks 22 and 25. You don't sound like a fusion drummer. You sound more like a jazz drummer who's playing with fusion musicians.

Frank: That's a nice compliment. Since my father is a jazz musician, that was the first music I heard. But I grew up in the '70s, when there was this eclectic mix of music on the radio, so I was exposed to all of that. Of course it's important, as you've always told me, to study the history of jazz. Listening to drummers such as Elvin, Philly Joe, and Kenny Clarke, they were speaking a language.

Mike: On track 25, I hear some Elvin Jones influences and a lot of Tony Williams when he played with Miles—jagged and all over the place.

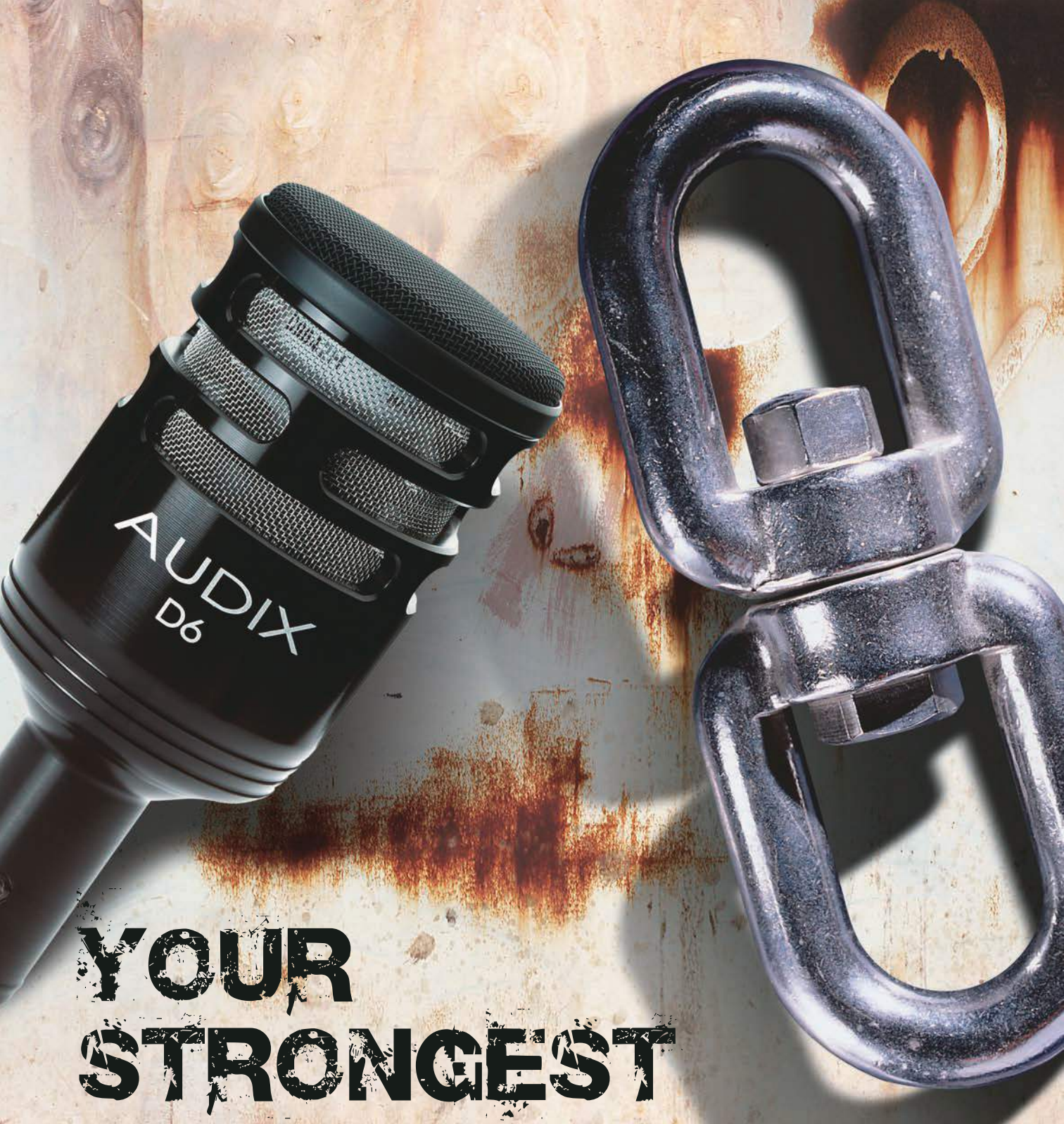
Frank: Yeah, that's exactly what I was going for. That track, "Nefertiti," is brilliant. Tony's playing is so emotional and contrapuntal, and it swings so hard.

Mike: You're really digging down deep. All the great drummers did that. They start digging down emotionally into the well and coming up with what, to me, really goes beyond drumming. It's one's life, actually.

Frank: It's the same thing I hear in your playing; it's beyond the notes.

Mike: It's always beyond the notes. I never see drumming as technical, no matter how much stuff a guy has. A lot of people that don't have that kind of ability tend to talk about other drummers that do as if they're all technical and aren't soulful. I find that dismissive, and, personally, I think it's bullshit. It's like they're making excuses for their own lack of ability.

Frank: I know what you mean; it's insulting. I remember someone told me that



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Buddy Rich said the roll is a very important thing. That's coming from a guy who not only had a great roll but also could swing the pants off a big band. Of course, we know the drummer's role is to serve the band, but it really depends on the situation and what kind of music you're playing as to how much or little you can play. In an improvisational setting, or if you're playing with any kind of creativity, the drummer should have equal interplay as well.

Mike: Billy Hart told me once that there's nothing wrong with playing straight time. In certain situations it's appropriate, and we all have to do it. But at other times, it's the drummer's role—it's his mandate—to propel the music onto a higher plane, to play his ass off.

Frank: Totally.

Mike: That's something New York drummers get. I love New York drummers. We have our own style and language.

Frank: You can definitely hear the New York in a New York drummer.

Mike: Immediately. Okay, you just played a tune from the book called "Mental Floss."

Frank: That's from a Brand X CD called *Xcommunication*.

Mike: First of all, that was really fantastic, a great effort by everybody. That was definitely [guitarist] John Goodsall's writing. I played with him a lot. It's coming from that deep place we were just talking about. It sounds like you have a wall of 32nd notes going on with your left hand and then I'm hearing a backbeat going on, and yet the hi-hat sounds like you're playing quarter notes. I can't tell because I'm not watching you. What's going on there?

Frank: Yeah, it's all 32nd notes. But it's like a halftime going on. It can just be half 16th notes.

Mike: In other words, whether they're 16ths or 32nds depends on the tempo.

Frank: Yeah, there's a backbeat, and there's a 32nd-note feel.

Mike: Okay, but on the 32nd note there's a break in the action. You're certainly not playing 32nd notes at that tempo, and there must be some breathing spots.

Frank: No, it pretty much is all 32nd notes.

Mike: So, in other words, you can roll with one hand for twelve minutes? Let's get real!

Frank: No, it's 32nd notes between the hi-hat, snare, and the bass.

Mike: Some of your ideas sound like your hands are playing at different rates, like you're getting ahead of the curve on purpose.

Frank: It's just some accents.

Mike: So accents deceive the listener that the hands are increasing the speed of the roll.

Frank: Right, if you put accents in certain places, it can be effective like that. It's inspired by the Steve Gadd thing; only he would do it for a short time, like four bars.

Mike: This sounds like Steve Gadd after he's had about three triple mochas, and somebody's given him an extra hand—the way you're dropping the bass drum in between there and the way you're dividing the hands and feet. But it sounds natural to hear you do it. It sounds like somebody's playing an Al Green groove, except there are a million things going on. Is that hard to do?

Frank: You just have to practice it. You can do it. I've heard you do it.

Mike: Is that groove in this book? Because if it is, I'm going to buy it. [laughs]

Frank: Yeah, it's the first one in the linear beats section.

Mike: But it's not linear, is it?

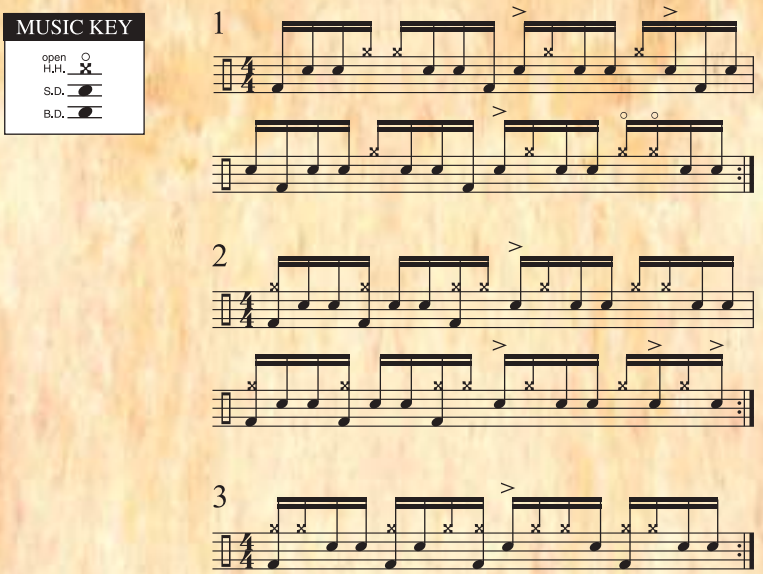
KATZ KICKS

Examples From Contemporary Drumset Phrasing

Besides being a technically astounding drummer and a highly regarded teacher, Frank Katz is also an author. His new book, *Contemporary Drumset Phrasing* (Hal Leonard), offers challenging workouts in many styles. (The accompanying CD, where you can hear Frank solo, perform with various groups, and play several examples, is amazing.)

To give you a taste of the book, here are some linear and quasi-linear beats found on page 16. (These are some of the easier examples!) The term linear as related to drumming means there are no unisons—no two instruments in the drumset are played at the same time.

"I use the term quasi-linear to mean there are a few unisons," Katz explains, "but the pattern is in a linear style. The unaccented snare notes should be played softly, as ghost notes. The accented snare notes can be played as rimshots. The sticking uses doubles (RRLL, etc.). The hi-hat is always played with the right hand and the snare with the left. (Reverse that if you are left-handed.)

"These beats can be played at moderate, fast, or *very* fast tempos," Frank insists. "But don't hesitate to practice them at a slow tempo until you get them down."

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Frank: It's linear and quasi-linear beats, some unison and some not. A lot of them are inspired by your grooves. Before I heard you, I was playing funk on 2 and 4. It's like playing jazz and funk at the same time.

Mike: Ordinarily, I'd rather have my teeth drilled than talk about drum technique, but since we are talking to Frank Katz, one of the great drummers of all time, let's talk some more about your technique. It sounds like what most drummers would like to be doing in their solos, but that's just the groove.

Frank: That's why I liked playing with Brand X. They were able to hear what I was doing and let me roll with it.

Mike: The last few pages of the book have some of your famous "Frankified flams."

Frank: [laughs] Kim Plainfield, one of my favorite drummers, came up with that name. The flams were heavily influenced by Tony Williams. I came up with the idea to play the flams as unison—you know, flat flams. Then I also came up with "the windshield wiper technique," which enables you to effortlessly play these phrases using flams and unisons at a high rate of speed.

Mike: How are you able to tell when to come in correctly?

Frank: If you can keep the quarter notes in your head as a baseline or reference, then you'll know where you are in the bar.

Mike: Do you count?

Frank: Sometimes.

Mike: Let's talk about your grip.

Frank: I find that the speed comes from the hands and the wrist. Personally, I prefer using matched grip, but I tell my students to use whatever works best for them.

Mike: Your sticks seem to be close to the head. You don't seem to be straining; it seems very relaxed.

Frank: Well, you don't want them to get too far off the head. I think you can get a lot of strong, powerful notes without bringing the sticks way up.

Mike: I agree a hundred percent. I saw Buddy Rich do that. He played his rolls high during the crescendos. Most everything else he played close to the head.

Frank: If you use the wrist and don't waste any motion, you can get a real strong sound without having to bring the stick way up. Of course, for showmanship's sake, you might want to do that, but you don't have to bring the sticks way up to get a loud sound.

Mike: Name a couple of CDs that best represent your art.

Frank: *Xcommunication* and *Manifest Destiny* by Brand X. *Manifest Destiny* is pretty deep. David Hentschel, the guy who produced many Genesis records and engineered Elton John's *Yellow Brick Road,* produced it. He got a fantastic drum sound in about twenty minutes. The mix was killing and I wasn't even there. That's the way it should be—pure joy.

Mike: If you had one thing you'd like to say about your drumming or your music, what would it be?

Frank: While drumming and playing music gives me great personal joy, I also want to create value through communicating that joy, and to encourage my audience and students to find their own means of expression and contribution to this thing called life on earth.

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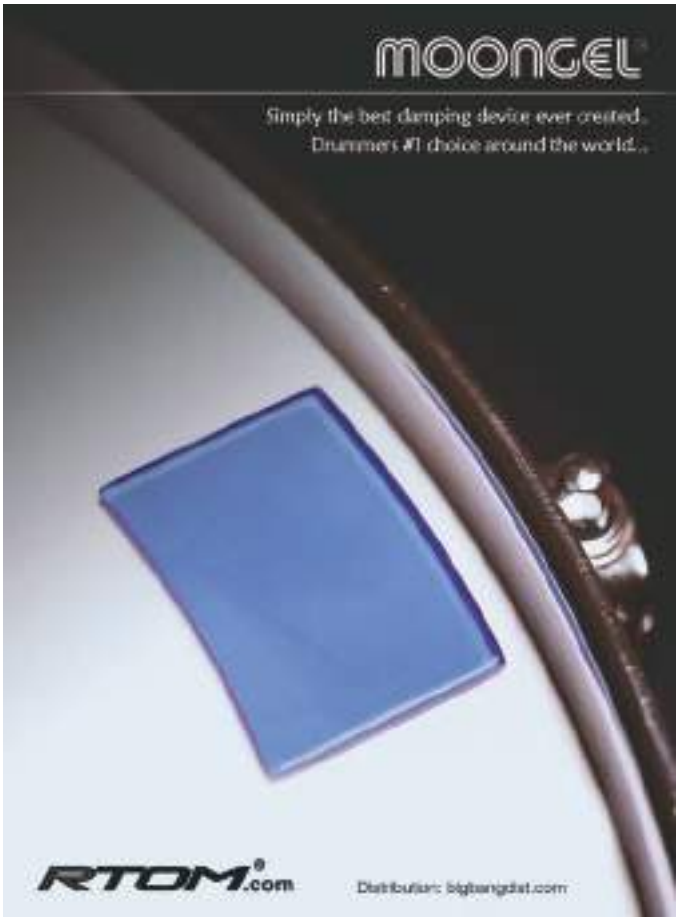

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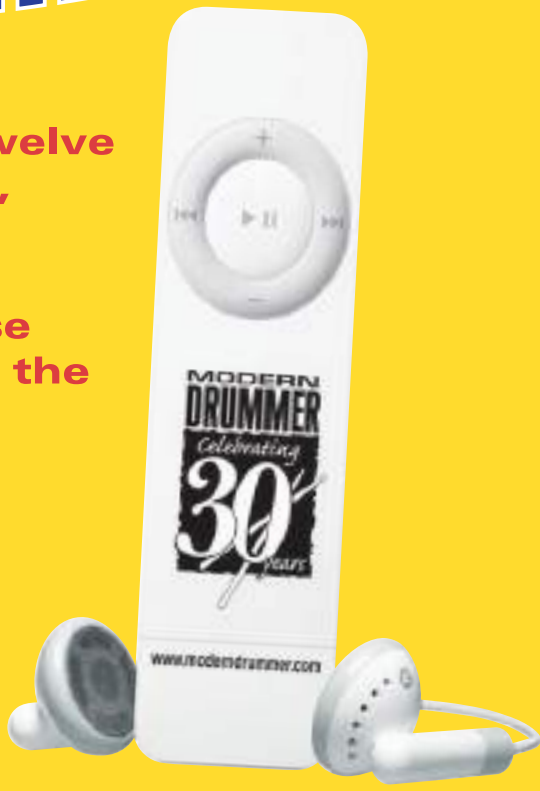

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Ratings Scale
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WINARD HARPER SEXTET
MAKE IT HAPPEN

★★★★☆

Harper's flirted with supplemental African percussion before, but this time around it shares center stage. On Winard's seventh disc as leader, his band's hard-bop roots are peppered with Afro-Caribbean, blues, and funk elements, and the drummer's robust, hard-swinging kit work is bolstered by the rich percussion layers of **Alioune Faye, Abdou Mboup, Kevin Jones,** and **Jeremy Jones.** A burning opener, "Segment," shows an especially winning intersection of bop and Afro-Caribbean. It's clear the polished band is having a blast thanks to Harper's galvanizing drive. And yes, a talking drum can be right at home in straight-ahead swing. (www.piadrum.com) **Jeff Potter**

THE PANIC CHANNEL
THE PANIC CHANNEL

★★★☆☆

Who'd expect three quarters of Jane's Addiction to be less hardcore freak than supernatural chic? Guitarist **Dave Navarro**'s psychedelic twists and **STEPHEN PERKINS**' innate ability to rhythmically converse with soaring bass lines make a kind of *psychic,* pop-centered hard rock. Perkins' calculated pounding rarely gives way to overplaying. His economical bashing befits the muscular opener, "Teahouse Of The Spirits," while his weighty, simple patterns enhance the sinful ballad "Bloody Mary" and the eerie eight-minute epic "Night One." Perkins does kick out some sinuous metal-funk here, but ultimately his measured approach offers deeper satisfaction. (Capitol) **Will Romano**

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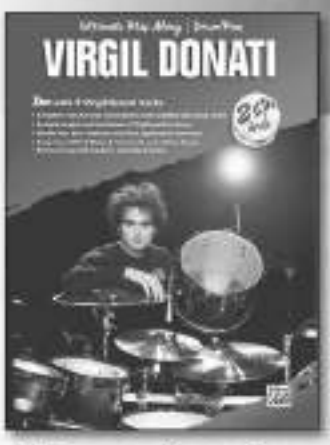

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THE BRONX THE BRONX (II)

★★★☆☆

The Bronx's second full-length finds the punk group further developing its electrified, combative groove into a more colorful presentation. Drummer **JORMA VIK** absolutely delivers here, provoking his drumheads with insistent tom slams on "Mouth Money" and the basic yet bouncy "Dirty Leaves." "Small Stone," at a blazing fifty-two seconds, finds Vik waging rhythmic war via choppy patterns and hammering accents set to a searing tempo. Still, Vik maintains a sense of loose space and style; the persistent 16th-note kicking on "History's Stranglers" even swings. Now *that's* some sharp, smart stickwork. (Island) **Waleed Rashidi**

GARAJ MAHAL BLUEBERRY CAVE

★★★☆☆

Draped in early-'70s fusion, rock, traditional Indian, soul (á la Sly Stone), European gypsy music, and hip-hop, this eclectic mix starts off smelly indeed, with the funky, trans-global opening track "The Shadow." Though the musical wanderlust sometimes threatens to unglue these tracks (half of which drummer **ALAN HERTZ** wrote or co-wrote), the one constant is the quartet's technical prowess. Hertz's power-finesse touch is bold and beautiful, and recalls Billy Cobham's landmark jazz-rock efforts. Stamped by Hertz's roundhouse rolls, Arabian techno-like vibe, and muscular funk grooves, this strong, ten-song set has something for everyone. (Harmonized) **Will Romano**

3 WAKE PIG

★★★½☆

This revamp of an earlier indie release is a conscious collision of influences, from prog-metal and '80s techno to classical and world. It's the kind of global approach we've come to expect from hard rockers these days. Versatile drummer **GARTDRUMM** enhances the band's cross-cultural flairs with a love of odd times, impeccable taste, and polyrhythmic aplomb. His stuttered stomping nails the yodel-heavy romp in "Where's Max," while his fluid soloing (sparked by percussionist/keyboardist **Joe Stote**) in "Amaze Disgrace" is laced as much with Mediterranean and Afro-Latin tempos as funk and house beats. This band certainly embraces virtuosity. File under Coheed & Cambria, System Of A Down, and Porcupine Tree. (Metal Blade) **Will Romano**

RAY RUSSELL GOODBYE SVENGALI

★★★☆☆

A key figure in England's free jazz/space rock scene, guitarist Ray Russell creates deep canyons of loose-knit improvisation here, accompanied by drummers **GARY HUSBAND** and **SIMON PHILLIPS**. Though much of the album is too ambient, and thus, drummer-less, to appeal to anyone beyond Russell fans, when Husband and Phillips are allowed to cut loose, the results are impressive. Phillips is joined by bassist Anthony Jackson on "Blaize," an amorphous soundscape (recorded live) on which the drummer plays skeletal, linear tom patterns before exploding into a driving shuffle groove. (Cuneiform) **Ken Micallef**

EXTREME BEATS

by Michael Parillo

GOD FORBID, MISERY INDEX, APIARY

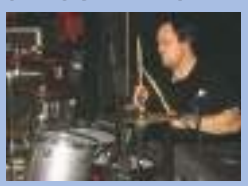
New Jersey quintet God Forbid's post-apocalyptic song cycle *IV: Constitution Of Treason* is full of inspired, passionate performances. It's straight-up, fist-raising metal, dynamic and—*gasp*—sometimes rather melodic. **COREY PIERCE** exploits the tension-and-release power of double bass, bringing in fleet feet when it's time to blast off. When the tempo slows, he plays some creative fills. (Century Media)

The breakneck pace hardly ever eases on *Discordia*, the grinding, thrashing new release from Maryland's Misery Index. **ADAM JARVIS** must have borrowed Dave Lombardo's espresso machine, because his brutally intense classic-metal patterns never flag. Jarvis's speed and precision on tracks like "Conquistadores" are the stuff of legend. (Relapse)

The drums are wisely mixed right out front on the debut from California's Apiary, *Lost In Focus*. **ADAM ELLIOTT** plays with power and imagination, and his sound is full and clear. As heavy dual guitars buzz around him like evil bees (an apiary, after all, is a collection of hives), Elliott hacks away at the beat as if he's chasing those bees with a machete in each hand. (Ironclad/Metal Blade)

MY LATEST OBSESSION

DEREK YOUNGSMA OF BLEEDING THROUGH ON AT THE GATES' SLAUGHTER OF THE SOUL



"Though this album came out in 1995, to this day it's my main drum influence for writing with Bleeding Through. A must-have for anyone who listens to heavy music, it's quite possibly the perfect metal record, years ahead of its time. **ADRIAN ERLANDSSON**'s drumming is machine-like, solid, brutal, and memorable. When I first heard this record I was about sixteen years old, a punk kid who grew up on metal. I remember being absolutely blown away. It was like *nothing* I'd ever heard before. My favorite song is probably the title track. It starts with a fast thrash beat, and then mixes driving melodic parts into skull-crushing breakdowns. Nowadays members of At The Gates are shredding in a few bands you might have heard of, like The Haunted, Disfear, and The Crown. Adrian currently drums for Cradle Of Filth. Do yourself a favor and pick this one up." Bleeding Through's latest album is *The Truth*.

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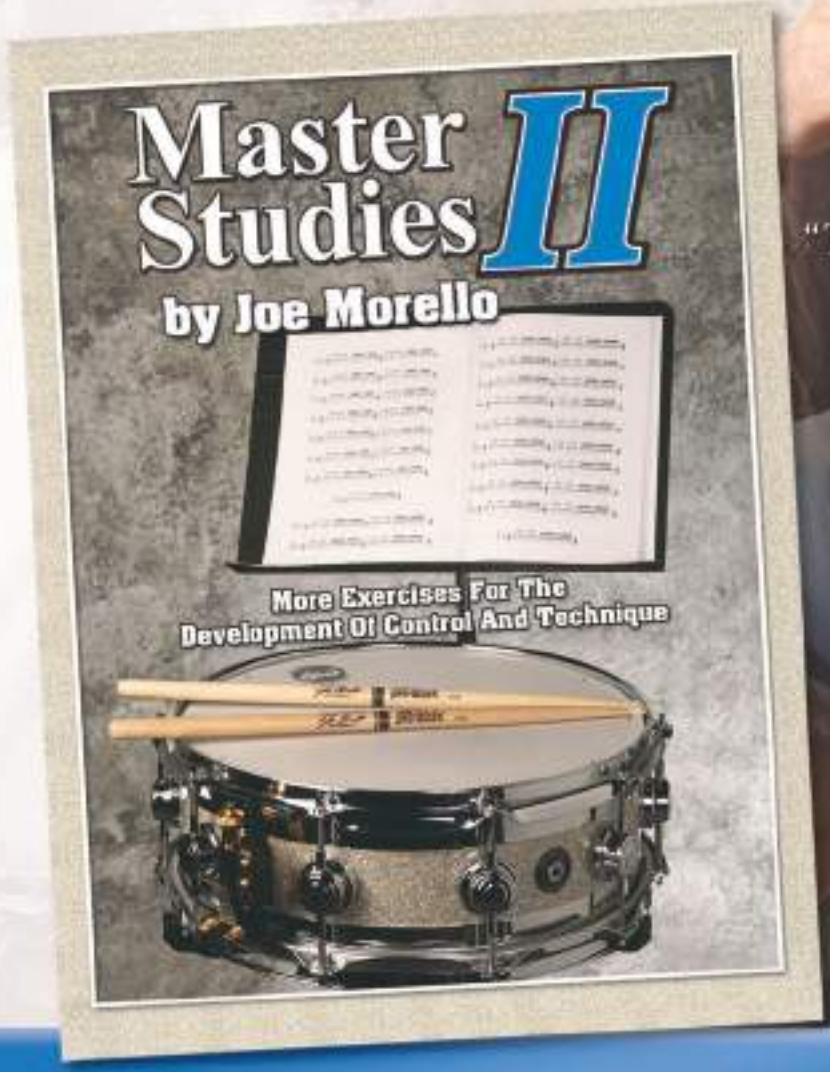

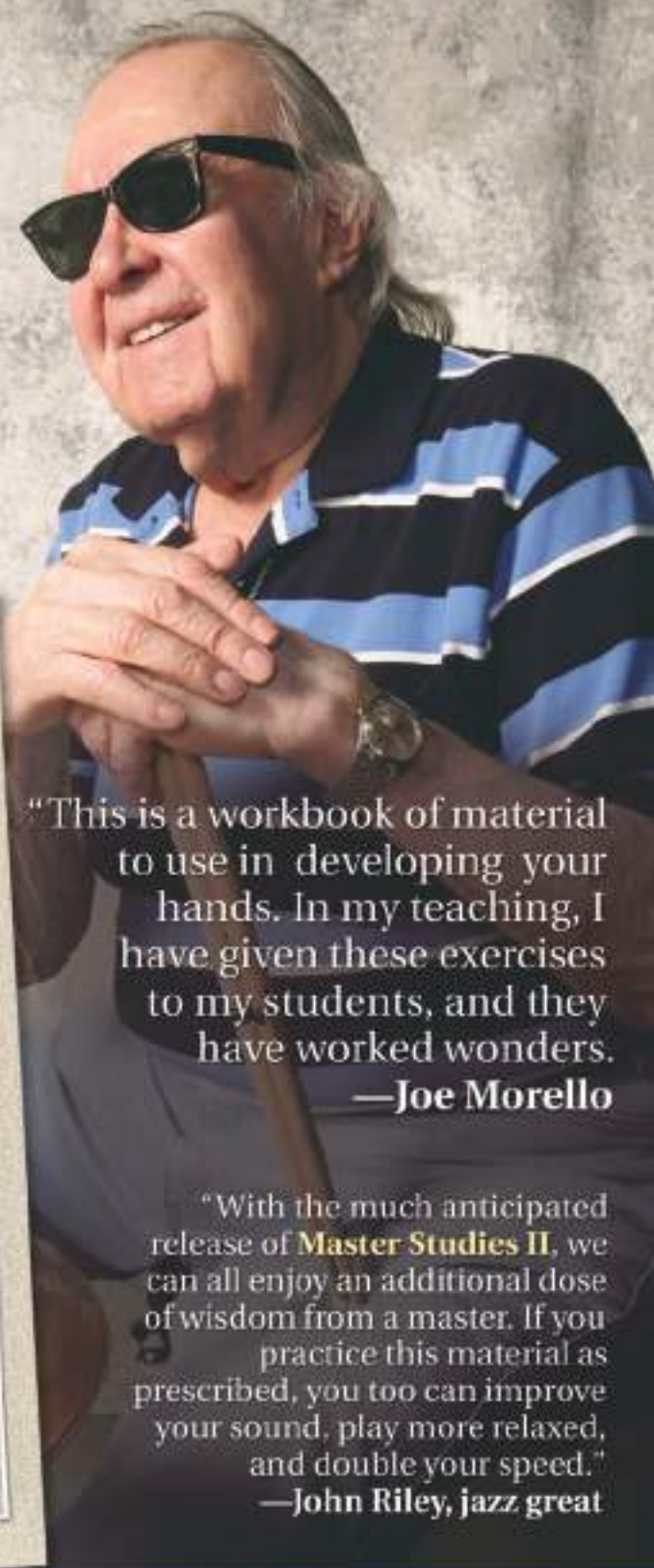

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—Joe Morello

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MULTI-MEDIA

CONTEMPORARY DRUMSET PHRASING: CREATIVE GROOVES AND FILLS FOR FUNK, FUSION, JAZZ AND MORE BY FRANK KATZ

BOOK/CD LEVEL: ADVANCED $19.95

★★★★★

One-stop shopping for outrageous fusion grooves? Look no further. Frank Katz began teaching at Drummers Collective at age nineteen, and has played with Brand X, James Blood Ulmer, Dave Douglas, and many others. In *Contemporary Drumset Phrasing* he brings his considerable knowledge to the fore in demonstrating some of the most arresting, syncopated, and contemporary hip-hop, jazz, rock, and future-funk grooves ever assembled in one book. And his Brand X buddies help him with several great performances. Grooving madly, Katz lays out a snare and hi-hat beat and offers eight different kick drum patterns to totally change the feel. Mapping out his stickwork in linear and quasi-linear patterns, discussing jazz phrasing, orchestrated fills, and displaced rhythms, Katz offers a rare peak into the work of a true drumming wizard. (Hal Leonard) **Robin Tolleson**

THE FUNKY SIX: THE DRUMMER'S GUIDE TO THE FUNK SHUFFLE AND OTHER SEXTUPLET BASED GROOVES BY D. SCOTT WILLIAMS

BOOK LEVEL: BEGINNER TO ADVANCED $19.95

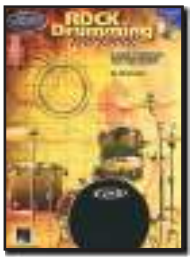
★★★☆☆

Triplet-based rhythms in shuffle and 6/8 patterns appear in beats and polyrhythms everywhere from hip-hop to prog rock. *The Funky Six* strengthens that side of the brain. The book starts with the funk shuffle, and by changing accents around, encourages some spicy interplay between kick and snare. By throwing in some open and closed hi-hat patterns to go along with the increasingly syncopated kick drum, beats are created that are loads of fun to play and sound like several people at once. This book helps cement your 6/8 groove, wherever you want to take it. (Mel Bay) **Robin Tolleson**

ROCK DRUMMING WORKBOOK: A GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR ROCK GROOVES, FILLS, AND PHRASES BY ED ROSCETTI

BOOK/CD LEVEL: BEGINNING TO INTERMEDIATE $19.95

★★☆☆☆



Author Roscetti is a skilled drummer with impressive credits, but this package may leave some beginners cold. For a book in the Musicians Institute's "Private Lessons" series, there is little sense of intimacy or detail. In fact, on the accompanying CD, the bass drum often gets lost in the mix and the percussion sometimes overrides the drums. This isn't a bad book (there *are* things to be learned here): It's fairly hefty, and even includes the tablature for the accompanying bass grooves heard on the CD. But ultimately this is a workbook with worksheets: Roscetti never takes readers by the hand. (Musicians Institute Press/Hal Leonard) **Will Romano**

SONGS THAT MADE LED ZEPPELIN FAMOUS BY CARMINE APPICE AND MARCO MOIR

CD LEVEL: ALL $12

★★★½☆

How cool would it have been to sit in as the drummer for Led Zeppelin? John Bonham's replacement! Now that's possible, minus the thousands of screaming fans. The *Songs That Made Led Zeppelin Famous* play-along CD is a pristine recreation of eight great Led Zeppelin hits minus Bonham's legendary performances. Obviously every great Zeppelin tune could not be reproduced on one CD, but producer Carmine Appice and performer Marco Moir choose songs that range from the straight-forward R&B feel of "How Many More Times" to the odd time signature of "Black Dog" and the uptempo snare drum work of "Rock And Roll." Some tracks start out with a verbal count of 4 and then include hi-hat clicks to help the drummer stay in time with the rest of the band. Others just have a hi-hat click throughout the whole song. Take your headphones out and get ready to rock. (Power Rock) **Fran Azzarto**

DRUMMING THE EASY WAY! THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PLAYING DRUMS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS BY TOM HAPKE

BOOK/CD LEVEL: BEGINNER $19.95

★★★½☆

Beginner books are plentiful, yet Tom Hapke's *Drumming The Easy Way!* stands out in the crowd. All eighty-six pages are clearly written, with only two bars on each system and study notes at the top of every lesson, as well as accompanying CD tracks and sticking markings. Hapke realizes that learning should be fun, so each exercise is followed by a solo—and what drummer doesn't want to take a solo? Each facing page is arranged so that the left side is related to the right. Now, that's as easy as it gets for a teacher and student. From quarter notes, 16th note–triplet fills, and dotted 8th–note grooves, to tom fills with crash cymbals, each lesson progresses slowly enough for any new drummer to grasp. (Cherry Lane) **Fran Azzarto**

RUSH REPLAY X3

DVD/CD LEVEL: ALL $39.98

★★★★☆

Spanning three DVDs and one CD, *Replay X3* documents Rush performances from tours behind the albums *Exit Stage Left*, *Grace Under Pressure*, and *A Show Of Hands*. Each DVD is accompanied by its original tour program, while the previously unreleased CD is the live soundtrack to the *Grace Under Pressure* DVD. Remastered both sonically and visually, the DVDs display (in better angles as the tours progress) Rush's staggering cohesiveness and **NEIL PEART**'s precision, power, and total concentration. The study in single-stroke rolls that is "The Rhythm Method—Drum Solo" proves one thing: The man is a maniac. For the Rush fan who has it all. (Mercury) **Ken Micallef**

Through You

In the Spotlight

Name: King
Band: Through You
Age: 13
City: Orlando, FL
Gear: Drum Workshop® drums and hardware, Zildjian® cymbals, Vic Firth® signature 5A woodtip sticks, Remo® heads.

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King

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PETE ZIMMER QUINTET BURNIN' LIVE AT THE JAZZ STANDARD

Take note pronto of this young up-and-coming drummer/leader on his second disc. Rooted in hard bop, albeit shaded with modern harmonies, the quintet is winning while Zimmer's drumming boasts a crisp, swinging command with judicious musicality. (www.tippinrecords.com) **Jeff Potter**

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VANTAGE POINT RESOLUTION

DVD LEVEL: ALL $24.99

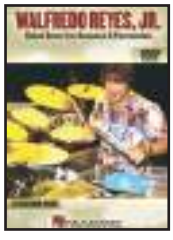
★★★★½

Led by **SIMON PHILLIPS** and pianist **Jeff Babko**, Vantage Point performs an intricate mélange of acoustic fusion and post hard bop compositions in this well-recorded and beautifully filmed DVD. Also featuring saxophonist **Brandon Fields**, trumpeter **Walt Fowler**, and bassist **Alphonso Johnson**, Vantage Point navigates difficult odd meter and Latin-based songs, and Phillips is in excellent form throughout. His straight-ahead touch is cut from Tony Williams' cloth, and his all too brief solos are based both on Williams and Billy Cobham. But Phillips' writing style is his own, performed by an LA super-band who explode on every track. (www.aixrecords.com) **Ken Micallef**

GLOBAL BEATS FOR DRUMSET AND PERCUSSION BY WALFREDO REYES JR.

DVD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED $24.95

★★★★



As the animated Walfredo Reyes Jr. explains (imagine if Keith Moon had been born in Cuba), this DVD is about being "split-brained." Part of the book deals with adapting traditional beats like the samba to the drumkit. Another section discusses playing percussion rhythms and drumset beats simultaneously. Elsewhere, with great energy and a fine band helping him, Reyes shows off some of the hybrid beats that he's used with Steve Winwood and Santana. At one point he slams a cha cha–bell timbale rhythm along with a drumset beat that frees the other percussionist to play congas and other percussion. The two sound like three players, and all the parts are covered. "Before the drumset was invented, a lot of rock already existed in the world," Reyes smiles. (Hal Leonard) **Robin Tolleson**

DYNAMIC DRUMMING 3: PLAYING WITH PRECISION AND POWER FEATURING CHRIS COLEMAN

DVD LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED $44.99

★★★½

The third installment of the *Dynamic Drumming* series features the amazing talent of Atlanta-based Gospel drummer/educator Chris Coleman. On this DVD, Chris demonstrates his flawless chops and effortless groove on several of his challenging funk/fusion compositions. The second half of the disc shifts to educational material, focusing on invaluable topics like constructing grooves with a bassist and playing with a sampler. The drummer also discusses his logical "ABC" practice method, which breaks down practice sessions into three segments: fundamentals (rudiments and sight-reading), five-way independence, and musicality. The only negatives here are the steep price and the absence of a thorough exercise booklet. (www.drumworksinc.com) **Michael Dawson**

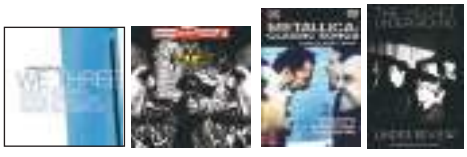
BLACK UHURU WITH SLY & ROBBIE DUBBIN' IT LIVE

DVD LEVEL: ALL $14.95

★★★½

This July 2001 show finds the legendary rhythm section of **SLY DUNBAR** and **Robbie Shakespeare** if not at the top of their game, then pretty close. The little bit of rust is excusable, for this was a return to the stage following a decade off the road. The "Riddim Twins" reunited with Black Uhuru for the legendary reggae band's return, and the duo's steady grooves and frequent grins speak volumes on how glad they were to be back. The best bits are the breakdown sections toward the end of many tracks, highlighted by Dunbar turning the beat inside out on "Party Next Door," and cinching up tight with Shakespeare's bass by alternating between two snares and the tom-toms on "What Is Life." (MVD) **Patrick Berkery**

AND FURTHERMORE...



LONNIE PLAXICO WESTSIDE STORIES (CD)

Half ultra-safe, half adventurous, cutting-edge bassist Lonnie Plaxico's latest features up-and-comer **KENNY GROHOWSKI** grabbing his moments and holding on tight, as he burns through some intense modern fusion cuts. (www.lonnieplaxico.com) **Adam Budofsky**

DAVID LIEBMAN/STEVE SWALLOW/ ADAM NUSSBAUM WE THREE (CD)

Three modern jazz kindred spirits reunite for a relaxing set of jazz standards and originals. **ADAM NUSSBAUM**'s flavorful brush- and stick-work are particularly tasty in this non-chordal environment. (Challenge Jazz) **Michael Dawson**

QUEENSRŸCHE OPERATION: MINDCRIME II (CD)

The long-awaited follow-up to the '80s classic, *OMC II* resolves the chilling tale of revenge told by these prog-metal kings. The album grows more impressive with each listen, and **SCOTT ROCKENFIELD**'s drumming is always musical and dynamic. (Rhino) **Mike Haid**

METALLICA CLASSIC SONGS (DVD)

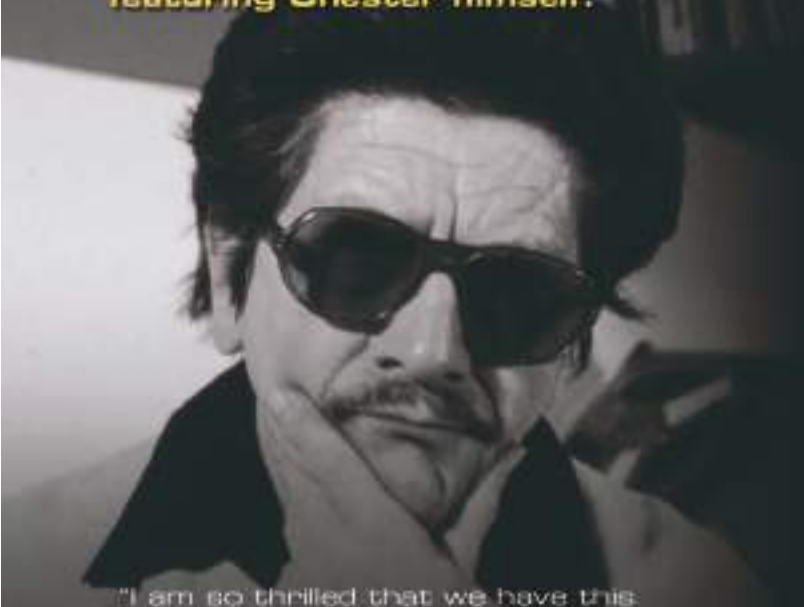
Instructor Jack E. Roth presents himself in an inviting, educated manner while performing and discussing examples from **LARS ULRICH**'s classic Metallica drum tracks. Unfortunately the often disjointed information within many examples can be confusing, especially for an untrained player. Written examples would have been helpful. And at $29.99, it's a pricy package for the amount of info offered. **Mike Haid**

VELVET UNDERGROUND AND **CAPTAIN BEEFHEART** UNDER REVIEW (DVD)

Two new releases in the fascinating Under Review DVD series continue the trend of quality critical analyses of important rock artists. Velvet Underground and Captain Beefheart installments benefit greatly from recent interview footage by, respectively, drummers **JOHN FRENCH** and **MAUREEN TUCKER.** Great stuff. (Sexy Intellectual) **Adam Budofsky**

The NEW NEW BREED: Gary Chester Speaks!

One of the drumming world's most popular and innovative books has received an upgrade. The New Breed, the classic book from legendary drummer/teacher Gary Chester, is now being released with a CD featuring Chester himself.



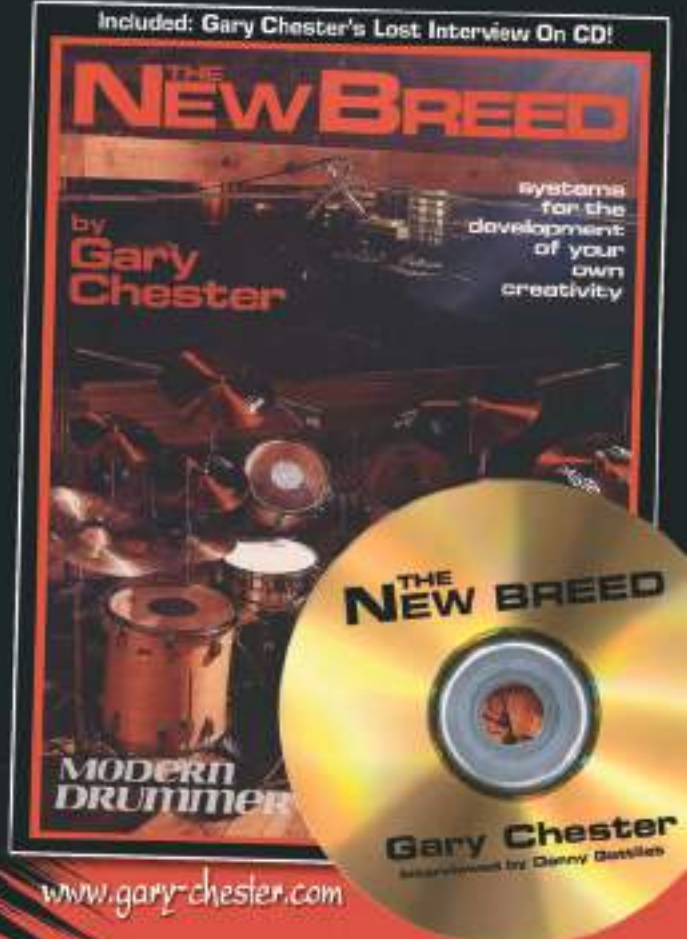
"I am so thrilled that we have this recording of Gary, with him going through his concepts, inspiring us all, in his own words."—**Danny Gottlieb**

"Thankfully, we drummers can be grateful and happy that there is audio of Gary speaking about the 'New Breed System.' Certainly, the dynamic of hearing the author speak makes the system very real, and very right for anyone not afraid to grow and to live with passion."—**Mike Mangini**

"Gary Chester was my teacher. While I studied with him he taught me some unique exercises that helped me improve as a drummer. I still use those exercises today. Amazing book, amazing teacher, and an amazing person."
—**Kenny Aronoff**

"The things I learned and skills I developed through Gary's studies are applied all the time. He systematically, yet subconsciously for the student, I believe, taught the drummer how to concentrate."—**Dave Weckl**

Included: Gary Chester's Lost Interview On CD!



www.gary-chester.com

In 1984, three years before his death, Gary Chester sat down with drumming great Danny Gottlieb to discuss his unique concepts. The interview is fascinating. Among the many concepts Chester covered are:

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Todd Anders Johnson

With Words And Sticks

Todd Anders Johnson is the voice, mind, and soul behind funk/hip-hop/jazz/Afro-Cuban group Salem. In Salem, the drummer/composer uplifts his band with infectious grooves and dynamic interplay, while also rhyming thought-provoking and socially conscious lyrics. Earlier this year, Salem opened for the legendary hip-hop group De La Soul. Their music also appears in an extreme sports film from Wink Inc. Productions. Salem's CD, *Selected*, has received strong reviews.

When not spreading the word with Salem, Todd plays African highlife and soukous with Dialy Kounda and Charlie Sounds, hip-hop with Soul Reclusion, and folk/jazz with the John Ridnell Trio. He also performed the drumset parts for Latin Percussion artist Arturo Rodriguez's instructional book/CD *Traditional Afro-Cuban Concepts In Contemporary Music*.

Outside of performing, Todd has developed a music education program at a non-profit center and alternative high school called Teens Inc. There, Todd teaches drums as well as lyric/songwriting classes.

Hometown: currently living in Boulder, Colorado
Education: Bachelors in geography, University Of Washington
Tools: Todd endorses Ayotte drums. He uses Zildjian and Wuhan cymbals, DW and Yamaha hardware, and Evans and Remo heads.
More info: www.salem-music.com

Mike Rosado

Raleigh's Go-To Guy

Thirty-year-old Mike Rosado is one of the most in-demand drummers on the vibrant Raleigh/Durham, North Carolina music scene. His diverse skills have been called upon for gigs in many styles. The drummer's desire to explore a variety of genres stems from his childhood, when his parents would play records ranging from Tito Puente and John Coltrane to Tchaikovsky and The Beatles.

Some of the musicians Mike has worked with include blues artist Cool John Ferguson, jazz guitarist Scott Sawyer, songwriter Rob Watson, lap-steel guitarist Mike Babyak's Triple Fret, and up & coming band Kennebec. While Mike keeps himself busy as a freelance musician, Kennebec is the drummer's full-time gig. They have a new album scheduled for release this year.

When discussing his passion for music, Mike states, "Music is a healer. It makes me feel good. It's one of the most powerful sources in the universe. And for that, I feel blessed to be a part of it."

Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina
Education: Savannah College Of Art And Design in Savannah, Georgia
Tools: Yamaha drums and Zildjian cymbals
More info: www.myspace.com/rizzomusic

Raphael Saini

Blast Beat Chaos

Raphael Saini's punishing double bass skills and syncopated grooves are a perfect match for the staccato riffs and soaring vocals of Italian metal band Chaoswave. On the band's 2004 self-titled EP and their 2005 full-length, *The White Noise Within*, the drummer uses his exceptional foot skills to lock into super tight guitar lines or to slam out a barrage of 16ths. Check out the track "Mirror" to hear Raphael's formidable skills, as he shifts from a moody odd-time intro, to a relentless double bass onslaught, to an airtight kick/guitar breakdown.

Raphael is also a first-call session musician. The twenty-three-year-old's studio credits include albums with avant-garde death metal band Misbelieving and metalcore group Sanisickation. Raphael also recorded some fast and furious death metal tracks for Mutilated Soul, and he plays alternative/metal with Blu Infinito.

Raphael runs a mail-order record label called STD Distro, teaches private lessons, and writes educational articles for Italian drum magazine *Percussioni*.

Hometown: Cagliari, Italy
Tools: Raphael endorses Meinl cymbals and the HansenFütz practice pedal. He also uses Premier drums, Vater sticks, DW hardware, and Axis pedals.
Influences: Pete Sandoval, Joe Morello, Hellhammer, Carmine Appice, Deen Castronovo, Aquiles Priester, and many more
More info: www.raphaelsaini.tk, www.chaoswave.it

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PercFest 2006

The annual PercFest drum festival, presented in the village of Laigueglia on the Italian Riviera, hosts some of Europe's top jazz players, as well as the cream of Italy's drummers and percussionists. This year's event, held between June 27 and July 2, offered six days of shows, with sixteen hours of music every day, plus fantastic beaches and a warm sun. And it all was for free!

Every day featured drum lessons led by Italian session ace Ellade Bandini, as well as by Marco Fadda (Billy Cobham, Noa), Marica Pellegrino, Dado Sezzi, and Marco Cavani. Brazilian percussion was taught by Gilson Silveira (Miguel Bosé, Ana Torroja), Cuban percussion lessons were led by Ivan Bridon Napoles (Italuba), and other courses focused on Arabian and Flamenco percussion.

PercFest also featured several clinics. Up-and-comers Riccardo Lombardo and Stefano Incani demonstrated their complicated double drumming technique, based on odd rhythms. Luca Capitani taught rock drumming, while Walter Calloni and Giorgio Palombino played Latin drums and percussion, as did Argentinean drummer Alex Battini. But perhaps the most impressive clinic was held by another newcomer, Marco Iannetta, who used a multiple-pedal setup during an impressive display of speed, sound, and independence.

PercFest's evening jazz concerts featured performances that included former Bill Evans drummer Eliot Zigmund, Dutch percussionist Jeroen De Rjik, Scottish singer Nick The Nightfly with Ellade Bandini on drums, a quintet led by drummer Roberto Gatto, the award-winning Paolo Fresu quintet with Ettore Fioravanti on drums, and frame drum specialist Massimo Carrano. The series concluded with the Jazz Art Orchestra big band performing some of Buddy Rich's hits, with drumming by Roberto Gatto, Ellade Bandini, and Tullio De Piscopo.

Mario A. Riggio

1. Each day started with a percussion-and-fitness session on the beach. From left: Dado Sezzi, Luca Capitani, Marco Cavani, and Ellade Bandini 2. Italian session great Ellade Bandini 3. This is Marco Iannetta's monstrous pedal setup. His foot technique increases speed in metal applications, and offers new performance opportunities in Latin and ethnic styles 4. Italian jazz great Roberto Gatto played as a bandleader and with the singer Gino Paoli 5. Dutch Percussionist Jeroen De Rjik added color to several concerts 6. Luca Capitani is one of Italy's most popular rock teachers 7. American jazz drummer Eliot Zigmund

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In Memoriam

Ralph Pace

Drummer, author, educator, and inventor Ralph Pace died this past June 9 at the age of eighty-one. Pace played professionally in the late 1940s, but was best known for the eleven drum instruction books he wrote, including *Cymbal Coordination* and *Variations Of Drumming*. The latter book was the standard curriculum at Berklee, Juilliard, and The Manhattan School Of Music for many years.

Pace was also known for the Set The Pace practice pad kits he invented, which combined rubber pads and adjustable wood frames. For almost thirty years, Pace hand-crafted each kit to order in the basement of his home.

WFD Finals At Summer NAMM

The World's Fastest Drummer contest was a feature of the recent National Association Of Music Merchants (NAMM) Summer Session in Austin, Texas. The Battle Of The Hands and Battle Of The Feet preliminary heats were held July 14 and 15. Also featured were technical demonstrations and appearances by WFD champions and world record holders Johnny Rabb, Tim Yeung, and Randy Briggs.

The top ten contenders in each division competed in the finals on Sunday, July 16. The Battle Of The Hands winner was Matt Smith of Flint, Michigan, with a score of 1,030 singles. At only sixteen years old, Matt is the youngest WFD World Champion to date. Hensley Souryavong achieved a score of 774 singles to win the Battle Of The Feet title. The winners and runners-up divided over $12,000 in prizes provided by Pearl, Remo, Axis, Pro-Mark, Meinl, Warner Bros., Drumometer, and DrumRadio.com.

The World's Fastest Drummer contest is sponsored by www.themusicedge.com, NAMM's teen promotional initiative. The next WFD World Finals contest is scheduled for NAMM Winter Session in Anaheim, California in January 2007. For more information email info@extreme-sportdrumming.com.

Battle Of The Hands winner Matt Smith with the WFD girls

Battle Of The Feet winner Hensley Souryavong with the WFD girls

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Yamaha Drums recently donated over thirty drumkits to the Jazz Foundation of America to help New Orleans–area musicians who lost everything to hurricane Katrina. The Foundation distributed the kits to professional drummers in the city, many of whom are now working in the Agnes Varis Jazz Foundation In The Schools Program.

Remo has affiliated with www.SupportMusic.com, the Music Education Coalition's initiative to support school music programs. This affiliation brings Remo into a network that seeks to keep music strong in schools.

Drummer/educator/author **Georg Voros** has founded the **Johannesburg Academy Of Drums** in Blairgowrie, South Africa. Information is available at www.jadrums.co.za.

Universal Percussion is now the exclusive US wholesale distributor for Bosphorus cymbals.

Master percussionist and Bronx native **Bobby Sanabria** was inducted into the **Bronx Walk Of Fame** this past June 24 by Bronx borough president Adolfo Carrion Jr. As part of the honor, a lamppost plaque bearing Bobby's name was unveiled along the New York City borough's most famous boulevard, The Grand Concourse.

Who's Playing What

Chad Smith entered the record books on April 6, 2006 by playing the world's first illuminated wood drumset with triggered light intensity for a Chili Peppers appearance on *Saturday Night Live*. The Pearl MRX drums were finished with CeeLite's flexible Light Emitting Capacitor (LEC) panels programmed to illuminate at 25% brightness, increase to 100% brightness when the drums were hit, then return to 25% brightness between hits. In other Pearl news, **Jeff Facci** (Full Blown Chaos) is a new Pearl artist.

Mike Novack Jr. (Every Time I Die) is playing Mapex drums.

Anthony "Skeeter" Liberto is now using Los Cabos drumsticks. **Don McKenzie** (Vernon Reid) is a new Orion cymbals endorser.

Tamburo drums were recently chosen for use by the band **Falter** on the NZ School Tour. The annual event lets one band develop their profile by taking their music, knowledge, and experience to students all around New Zealand.

Ney Rosauro has joined the Vic Firth artist and educator roster. A native of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Ney has developed a successful international career as a percussionist, composer, and pedagogue.

Felix "D-Kat" Pollard (Clay Aiken, Anastacia) and **Piwee Desfray** (French session drummer) have joined Meinl's family of cymbal artists.

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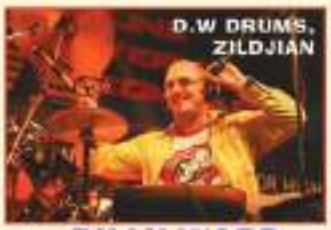

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Kent, Revere, Champion, And Vibratone

Classic Affordability

by Harry Cangany

In my book, *The Great American Drums*, I described Kent Manufacturing as a small company that built drums in Upstate New York in the 1960s. They made all four brands listed in this article's title, but sent them to the public through different distributors. The photos depict a white marine Kent snare and a blue sparkle Revere.

I wanted to showcase this little-known company for two reasons. First, many baby boomers got their start playing drums made by Kent. Second, they may provide a viable alternative today to one of the highly sought-after (and expensive) vintage brands.

Kent drums had lugs that were cast with a simple design. The snare throw-offs, butt plates, and strainers were definitely not state-of-the-art. Revere drums were fitted with simple cast lugs that were threaded instead of having swivel nuts. Again, the parts and fittings were not up to the quality of the major manufacturers. The Revere strainer is reminiscent of a Gladstone model.

Kent used triple-flanged and straight hoops; Revere used the latter. A Vibratone snare drum is an exact copy of a Kent. All the Champions I've seen are single-tension models.

The interesting thing about Kent-made drums is that their shells are identical: unfinished 3-ply maple, very thin, with rounded bearing edges. The snare shells are not thick, like many of the era. They're thin, like old Gretsch tom-toms.

So here's the vexing question: Did New York State–based Kent get their shells from New York City–based Gretsch? If I were a betting man, I would say yes. The drums sound fine. They were often featured in ads displaying Kent guitars and microphones, which were clearly imported models.

Kent's portion of drum history ends on a somewhat sad note. According to the story that has come down through the years, the company's president lost heart when his son and heir apparent was killed in a car accident.

Kent, Revere, and Vibratone snare drums are probably $100 models. Complete sets are probably worth $300. However, on the way to finding a gem, be prepared to find rusty, pitted metal, lots of six-lug snare drums, three-piece sets, center-mounted tom and bass lugs (à la the Ludwig Club Date), and splotchy gold sparkle.

On the other hand, if you persevere, you *might* find a great-sounding maple set for less than the cost of a Gretsch snare drum. So get going and check out the flea markets in your area.

Harry Cangany is the owner of The Drum Center Of Indianapolis, which specializes in vintage American drums. He is a recognized authority on drum history, and is the author of *The Great American Drums And The Companies That Make Them*, from Modern Drummer Publications.

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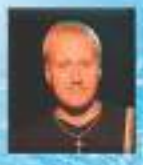

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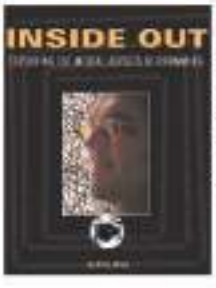

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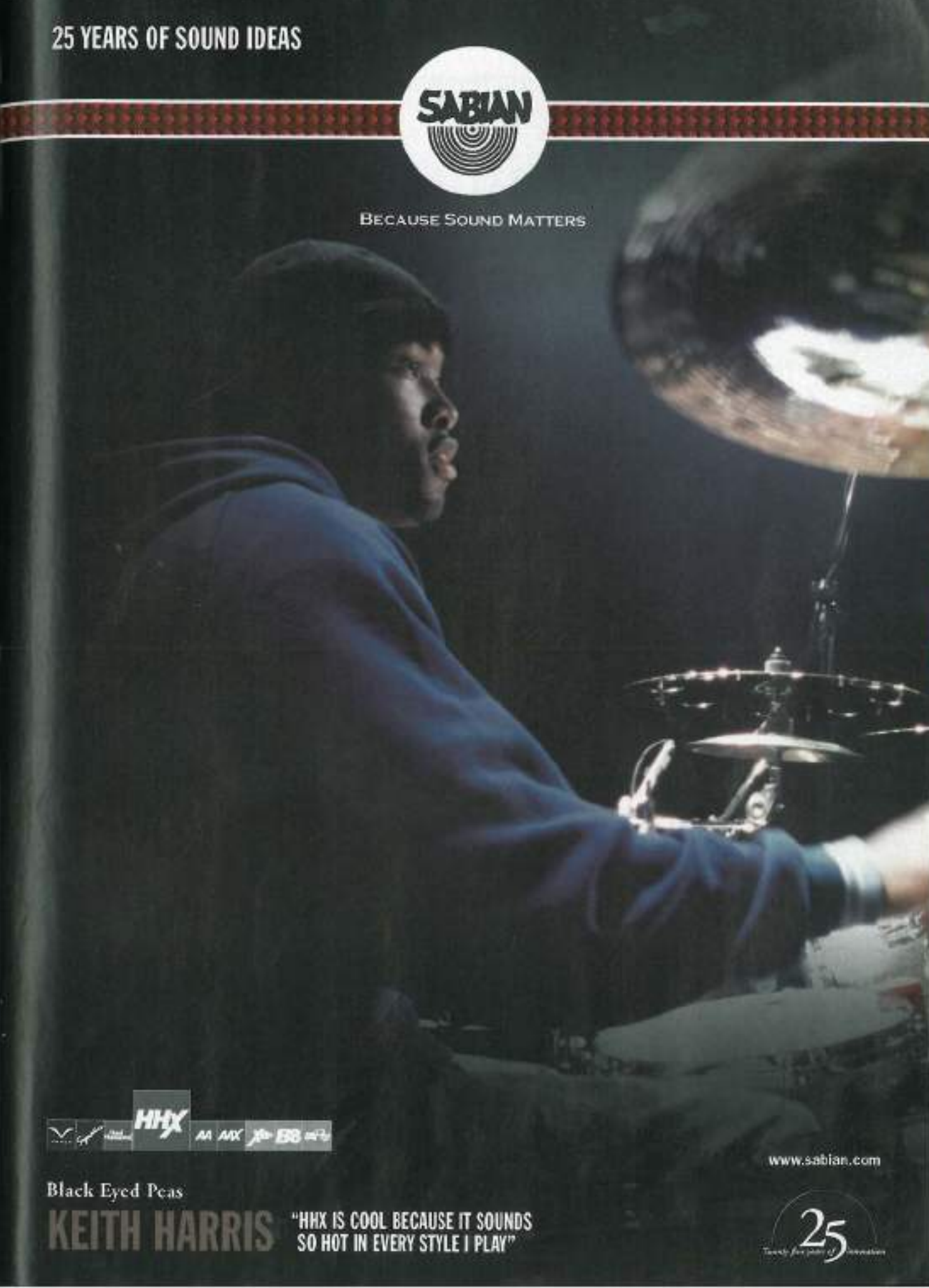

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His Furry Friend

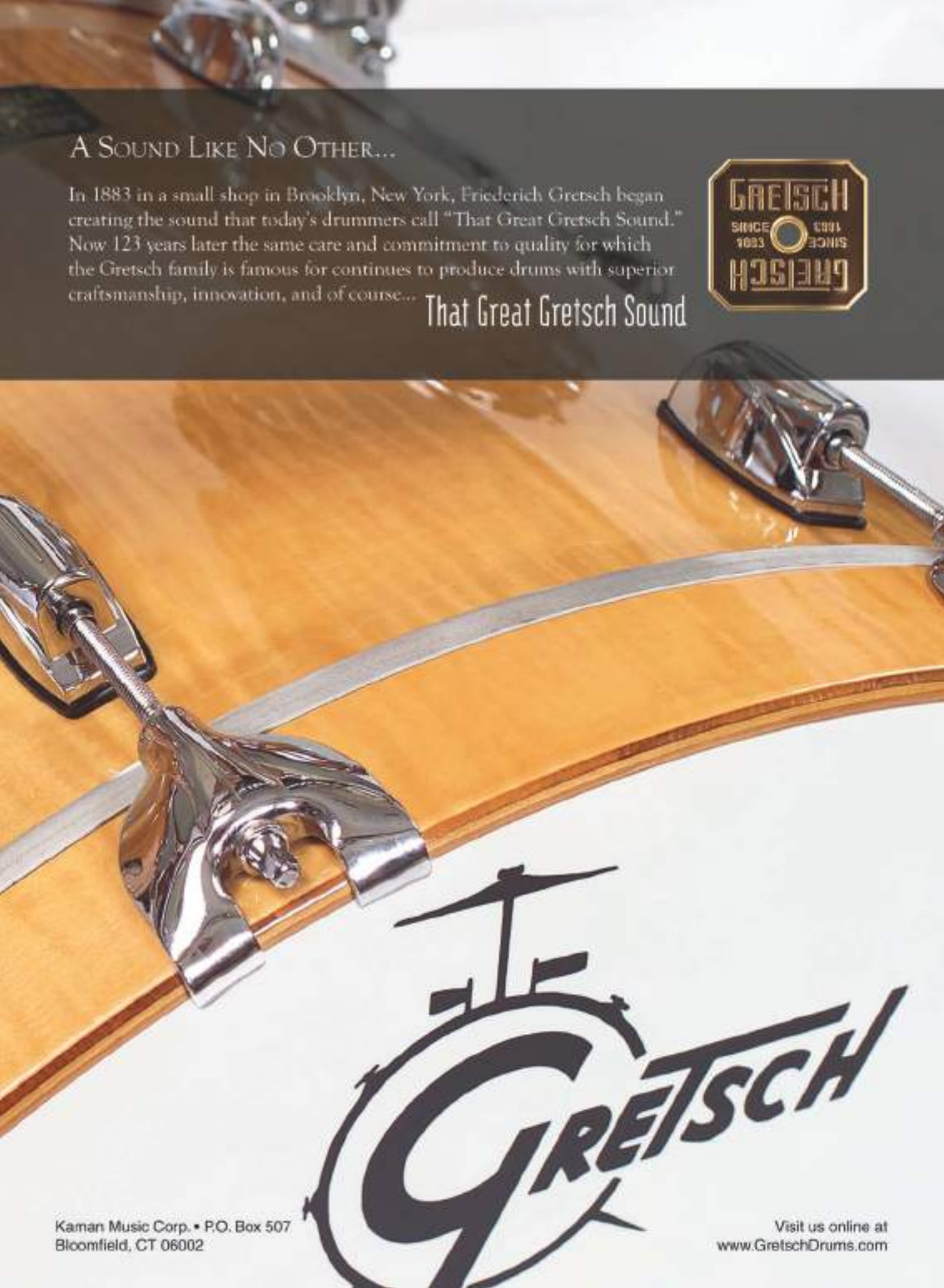
Frank Delecaris of Kansas City, Missouri wanted a red drumkit that would sound good and get plenty of attention. His fur-covered drums achieved that goal. When observers commented that the kit reminded them of the famous red furry *Sesame Street* character Elmo, a decal of Elmo's face was added to complete the image.

The kit features mid-'90s Remo Acousticon drums. The snare is a Pacific maple wood-hoop model that was covered without taking the lugs and hardware off. The angled configuration of the cymbal stands creates a look that's reminiscent of the '80s glam rock era, when it was common to suspend crash cymbals. The cymbal stands are Tama Stilt models with extra middle booms. Frank triggers the kit with Pintech and ddrum triggers into an Alesis D5 module.

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides or high-resolution (300 dpi) digital photos are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit.

Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.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